CHAUCER

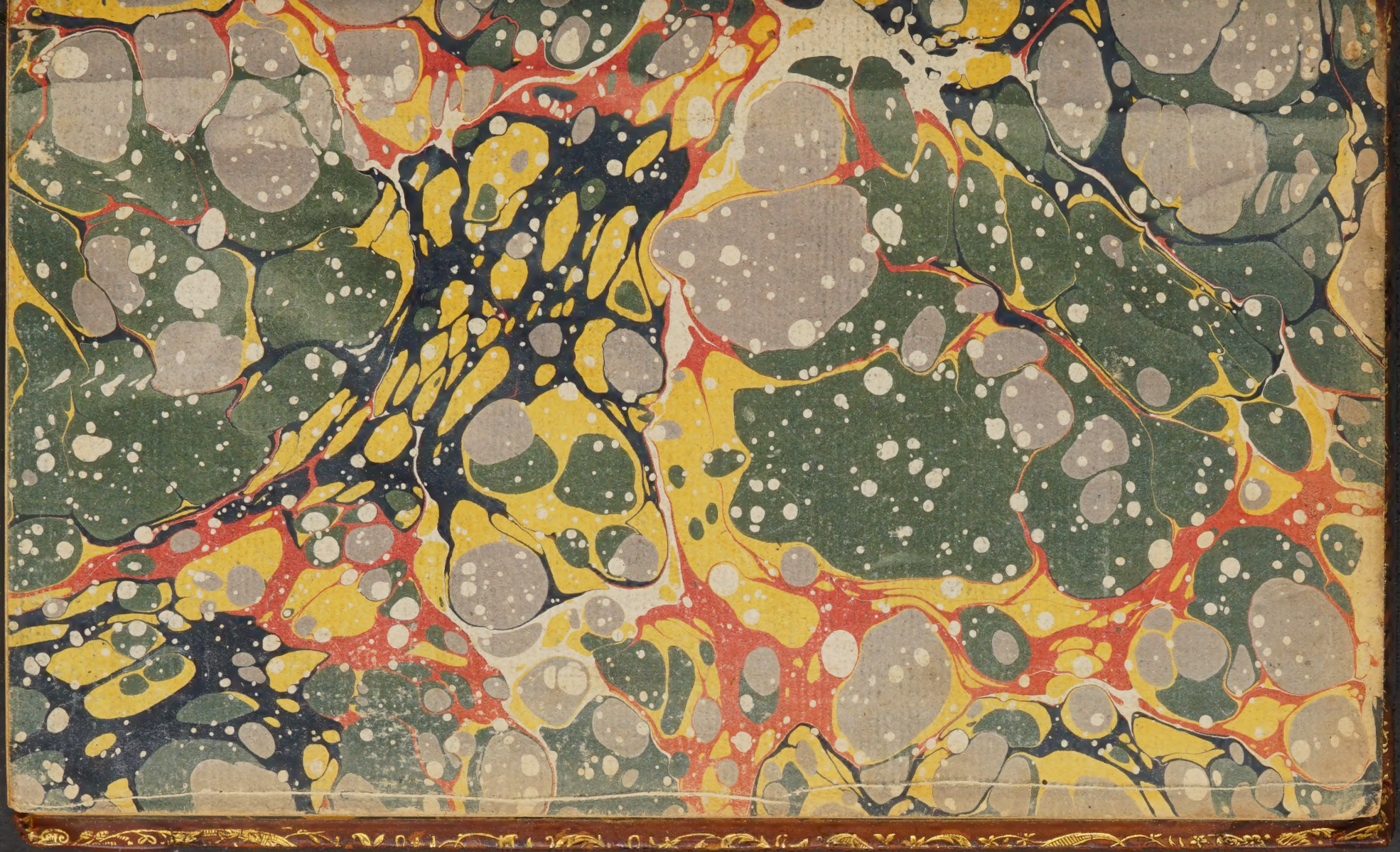
VOL.

III.

MALONE'S

COPY

Henry Latham, M.A.



THE

CANTERBURY TALES

OF

CHAUCER.

To which are added,

An ESSAY upon his LANGUAGE and VERSIFICATION; an INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE; and NOTES.

VOL. III.

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THE CANTERBURY TALES.

THE MONKES PROLOGUE.

WHAN ended was my tale of Melibee,
And of Prudence and hire benignitee,
Our hoſte ſaide; as I am faithful man,
And by the precious *corpus Madrian*,
I hadde lever than a barell of ale,
That goode lefe my wif had herde this tale:
For ſhe n'is no thing of ſwiche patience,
As was this Melibeus wif Prudence.
By Goddes bones, whan I bete my knaves,
She bringeth me the grete clobbed ſtaves,
And cryeth; ſlee the dogges everich on.
And breke hem bothe bak and every bon.
And if that any neighebour of mine
Wol not in chirche to my wif encline,
Or be ſo hardy to hire to treſpace,
Whan ſhe cometh home ſhe rampeth in my face,
And cryeth; falſe coward, wreke thy wif:
By *corpus Domini*, I wol have thy knif,
And thou ſhalt have my diſtaf, and go ſpinne.
Fro day til night right thus ſhe wol beginne.
Alas, ſhe ſaith, that ever I was yſhape
To wed a milkſop, or a coward ape,

That wol ben overladde with every wight!
Thou darſt not ſtonden by thy wives right.
This is my lif, but if that I wol fight,
And out at dore anon I mote me dight,
Or elles I am loſt, but if that I
Be like a wilde leon, fool-hardy.
I wote wel ſhe wol do me ſlee ſom day
Som neighebour, and thanne go my way,
For I am perilous with knif in honde,
Al be it that I dare not hire withſtonde:
For ſhe is bigge in armes by my faith,
That ſhal he finde, that hire miſdoth or ſaith.
But let us paſſe away fro this matere.
My lord the Monk, quod he, be mery of chere,
For ye ſhul telle a tale trewely.
Lo, Rouchefter ſtondeth here faſte by.
Ride forth, min owen lord, breke not our game.
But by my trouthe I can not telle youre name;
Whether ſhal I call you my lord Dan John,
Or Dan Thomas, or elles Dan Albon?
Of what hous be ye, by your fader kin?
I vow to God, thou haſt a ful faire ſkin;
It is a gentil paſture ther thou goſt;
Thou art not like a penaunt or a goſt.
Upon my faith thou art ſom officer,
Som worthy ſextein, or ſom celerer.

For

For by my fadres ſoule, as to my dome,
Thou art a maiſter, whan thou art at home;
No poure cloiſterer, ne non novice,
But a governour bothe ware and wiſe,
And therwithal of braunes and of bones
A right wel faring perſone for the nones.
I pray to God yeve him confuſion,
That firſt thée brought into religion.
Thou woldeſt han ben a trede-foul a right,
Haddeſt thou as grete leve, as thou haſt might,
To parfourme all thy luſt in engendrure,
Thou haddeſt begeten many a creature.
Alas! why wereſt thou ſo wide a cope?
God yeve me ſorwe, but, and I were pope,
Not only thou but every mighty man,
Though he were ſhore ful high upon his pan,
Shuld have a wif, for al this world is lorn;
Religion hath take up all the corn
Of treding, and we borel men ben ſhrimpes:
Of feble trees ther comen wretched impes.
This maketh that our heires ben ſo ſclendre
And feble, that they moun not wel engendre.
This maketh that our wives wol aſſaye
Religious folk, for they moun better paye
Of Venus payementes than mowen we:
God wote, no luſſheburghes payen ye.

But be not wroth, my lord, though that I play;
Ful oft in game a ſothe have I herd ſay.
This worthy Monke toke all in patience,
And ſaide; I wol don all my diligence,
As fer as ſouneth into honeſtee,
To tellen you a tale, or two or three.
And if you liſt to herken hiderward,
I wol you ſayn the lif of Seint Edward;
Or elles tragedies firſt I wol telle,
Of which I have an hundred in my celle.
Tragedie is to ſayn a certain ſtorie,
As olde bookes maken us memorie,
Of him that ſtood in gret proſperitee,
And is yfallen out of high degree
In to miſerie, and endeth wretchedly.
And they ben verſified communly
Of ſix feet, which men clepen exametron:
In proſe eke ben endited many on,
And eke in metre, in many a ſondry wiſe.
Lo, this declaring ought ynough ſuffice.
Now herkeneth, if you liketh for to here.
But firſt I you beſeche in this matere,
Though I by ordre telle not thiſe thinges,
Be it of popes, emperoures, or kinges,
After hir ages, as men written finde,
But telle hem ſom before and ſom behinde,

As

As it now cometh to my remembrance,
Have me excuſed of min ignorance.

THE MONKES TALE.

I wol bewaile in manere of tragedie
The harm of hem, that ſtode in high degree,
And fellen ſo, that ther n'as no remedie
To bring hem out of hir adverſitee.
For certain whan that fortune liſt to flee,
Ther may no man of hire the cours withholde:
Let no man truſt on blinde proſperitee;
Beth ware by thiſe enſamples trewe and olde.

Lucifer.

At Lucifer, though he an angel were
And not a man, at him I wol beginne.
For though fortune may non angel dere,
From high degree yet fell he for his ſinne
Doun into helle, wheras he yet is inne.
O Lucifer, brighteſt of angels alle,
Now art thou Sathanas, that maiſt not twinne
Out of miſerie, in which that thou art falle.

Adam.

Lo Adam, in the feld of Damaſcene
With Goddes owen finger wrought was he,
And not begeten of mannes ſperme unclene,
And welte all Paradis ſaving o tree:

Had never worldly man ſo high degree
As Adam, til he for miſgovernance
Was driven out of his proſperitee
To labour, and to helle, and to meſchance.

Sampſon.

Lo Sampſon, which that was annunciat
By the angel, long or his nativitee:
And was to God Almighty conſecrat,
And ſtode in nobleſſe while he mighte ſee;
Was never ſwiche another as was he,
To ſpeke of ſtrength, and therto hardineſſe;
But to his wives tolde he his ſecree,
Thurgh which he ſlow himſelf for wretchedneſſe.

Sampſon, this noble and mighty champion,
Withouten wepen, ſave his handes twey,
He ſlow and all to-rente the leon,
Toward his wedding walking by the wey:
His falſe wif coude him ſo pleſe, and pray,
Til ſhe his conſeil knewe; and ſhe untrewe
Unto his foos his conſeil gan bewray,
And him forſoke, and toke another newe.

Three hundred foxes toke Sampſon for ire,
And all hir tayles he togeder bond:
And ſet the foxes tayles all on fire,
For he in every tayl had knit a brond.

And they brent all the cornes in that lond,
And all hir oliveres, and vines eke.
A thouſand men he ſlow eke with his hond,
And had no wepen, but an aſſes cheke.

Whan they were ſlain, ſo thurſted him, that he
Was wel nie lorne, for which he gan to preye,
That God wold on his peine han ſom pitee,
And ſend him drinke, or elles moſte he deye:
And of this aſſes cheke, that was ſo dreye,
Out of a wang toth ſprang anon a welle,
Of which he dranke ynough, ſhortly to ſeye.
Thus halp him God, as *Judicum* can telle.

By veray force at Gaſa on a night,
Maugre the Philiſtins of that citee,
The gates of the toun he hath up plight,
And on his bak ycaried hem hath he
High on an hill, wher as men might hem ſe.
O noble mighty Sampſon, lefe and dere,
Haddeſt thou not told to women thy ſecree,
In all this world ne had ther ben thy pere.

This Sampſon never ſider drank ne wine,
Ne on his hed came raſour non ne ſhere,
By precept of the meſſager divine,
For all his ſtrengthes in his heres were:

And fully twenty winter yere by yere
He hadde of Iſrael the governance:
But ſone ſhal he wepen many a tere,
For women ſhuln him bringen to meſchance.

Unto his lemman Dalida he told,
That in his heres all his ſtrengthe lay,
And falſely to his fomen ſhe him ſold;
And ſleping in hire barme upon a day
She made to clip or ſhere his here away,
And made his fomen all his craft eſpien;
And whan that they him fond in this array,
They bond him faſt, and putten out his eyen.

But or his here was clipped or yſhave,
Ther was no bond, with which men might him bind,
But now is he in priſon in a cave,
Wheras they made him at the querne grinde.
O noble Sampſon, ſtrongeſt of mankind,
O whilom juge in glory and richeſſe,
Now mayeſt thou wepen with thin eyen blind,
Sith thou fro wele art falle in wretchedneſſe.

The ende of this caitif was, as I ſhal ſeye:
His fomen made a feſte upon a day,
And made him as hir fool before hem pleye;
And this was in a temple of gret array.

But

But at the laſt he made a foule affray,
For he two pillers ſhoke, and made hem falle,
And doun fell temple and all, and ther it lay,
And ſlow himſelf, and eke his fomen alle.

This is to ſayn, the princes everich on,
And eke three thouſand bodies were ther ſlain
With falllng of the gret temple of ſton.
Of Sampſon now wol I no more ſain:
Beth ware by this enſample old and plain,
That no men tell hir conſeil to hir wives
Of ſwiche thing, as they wold han ſecree fain,
If that it touch hir limmes or hir lives.

Hercules.

Of Hercules the ſoveraine conquerour
Singen his werkes laude, and high renoun;
For in his time of ſtrength he was the flour.
He ſlow and raft the ſkinne of the leon;
He of Centaures laid the boſt adoun;
He Harpies ſlow, the cruel briddes felle;
He golden apples raft fro the dragon;
He drow out Cerberus the hound of helle.

He ſlow the cruel tirant Buſirus,
And made his hors to fret him fleſh and bon;
He ſlow the firy ſerpent venemous;
Of Achelous two hornes brake he on.

And

And he ſlow Cacus in a cave of ſton;
He ſlow the geaunt Anteus the ſtrong;
He ſlow the griſely bore, and that anon;
And bare the hevene on his nekke long.

Was never wight ſith that the world began,
That ſlow ſo many monſtres, as did he;
Thurghout the wide world his name ran,
What for his ſtrength, and for his high bountee;
And every reaume went he for to ſee,
He was ſo ſtrong that no man might him let;
At bothe the worldes endes, ſaith Trophee,
In ſtede of boundes he a piller ſet.

A lemman had this noble champion,
That highte Deianire, as freſh as May;
And as thiſe clerkes maken mention,
She hath him ſent a ſherte freſh and gay:
Alas! this ſherte, alas and wala wa!
Envenimed was ſotilly withalle,
That or that he had wered it half a day,
It made his fleſh all from his bones falle.

But natheles ſom clerkes hire excuſen
By on, that highte Neſſus, that it maked;
Be as may be, I wol hire not accuſen;
But on his bak this ſherte he wered al naked,

Til

Til that his fleſh was for the venim blaked:
And whan he ſaw non other remedie;
In hote coles he hath himſelven raked,
For with no venime deigned him to die.

Thus ſtarf this worthy mighty Hercules.
Lo, who may truſt on fortune any throw?
For him that folweth all this world of pres,
Or he be ware, is oft ylaid ful lowe:
Ful wiſe is he, that can himſelven knowe.
Beth ware, for whan that fortune liſt to gloſe,
Than waiteth ſhe hire man to overthrowe
By ſwiche a way, as he wold leſt ſuppoſe.

Nabuchodonoſor.

The mighty trone, the precious treſor,
The glorious ſceptre, and real majeſtee,
That hadde the king Nabuchodonoſor,
With tonge unnethes may deſcrived be.
He twies wan Jeruſalem the citee,
The veſſell of the temple he with him ladde;
At Babiloine was his ſoveraine ſee,
In which his glorie and his delit he hadde.

The fayreſt children of the blood real
Of Iſrael he did do gelde anon,
And maked eche of hem to ben his thral.

Amonges

Amonges other Daniel was on,
That was the wiſeſt child of everich on;
For he the dremes of the king expouned,
Wher as in Caldee clerk ne was ther non,
That wiſte to what fin his dremes ſouned.

This proude king let make a ſtatue of gold
Sixty cubites long, and ſeven in brede,
To which image bothe yonge and old
Commanded he to loute, and have in drede,
Or in a fourneis, ful of flames rede,
He ſhuld be brent, that wolde not obeye:
But never wold aſſenten to that dede
Daniel, ne his yonge felawes tweye.

This king of kinges proud was and elat;
He wend that God, that ſit in majeſtee,
Ne might him nat bereve of his eſtat:
But ſodenly he loſt his dignitee,
And like a beſt him ſemed for to be,
And ete hey as an oxe, and lay therout:
In rain with wilde beſtes walked he,
Til certain time was ycome about.

And like an egles fethers wex his heres,
His neyles like a briddes clawes were,
Til God releſed him at certain yeres,

And

And yaf him wit, and than with many a tere
He thanked God, and ever his lif in fere
Was he to don amis, or more treſpace:
And til that time he laid was on his bere,
He knew that God was ful of might and grace.

Balthaſar.

His ſone, which that highte Balthaſar,
That held the regne after his fadres day,
He by his fader coude not beware,
For proude he was of herte, and of array:
And eke an ydolaſter was he ay.
His high eſtat aſſured him in pride;
But fortune caſt him doun (and ther he lay)
And ſodenly his regne gan devide.

A feſte he made unto his lordes alle
Upon a time, and made hem blithe be,
And than his officeres gan he calle;
Goth, bringeth forth thilke veſſels, quod he,
Which that my fader in his proſperitee
Out of the temple of Jeruſalem beraft,
And to our highe goddes thanke we
Of honour, that our eldres with us laft.

His wif, his lordes, and his concubines
Ay dronken, while hir appetites laſt,

Out

Out of thiſe noble veſſels ſondry wines.
And on a wall this king his eyen caſt,
And ſaw an hand armles, that wrote ful faſt,
For fere of whiche he quoke, and ſiked ſore:
This hand, that Balthaſar ſo ſore agaſt,
Wrote *Mane techel phares*, and no more.

In al that lond Magicien was non,
That coud expounen what this lettre ment,
But Daniel expouned it anon,
And ſaid; O king, God to thy fader lent
Glorie and honour, regne, treſour, and rent;
And he was proud, and nothing God ne dradde;
And therfore God gret wreche upon him ſent,
And him beraft the regne that he hadde.

He was out caſt of mannes compagnie,
With aſſes was his habitation;
And ete hey, as a beſt, in wete and drie,
Til that he knew by grace and by reſon,
That God of heven hath domination
Over every regne, and every creature:
And than had God of him compaſſion,
And him reſtored his regne and his figure.

Eke thou, that art his ſone, art proud alſo,
And knoweſt all thiſe thinges verily;

And art rebel to God, and art his fo.
Thou dranke eke of his veſſels boldely,
Thy wif eke, and thy wenches ſinfully
Dranke of the ſame veſſels ſondry wines,
And heried falſe goddes curſedly,
Therfore to thee yſhapen ful gret pine is.

This hand was ſent fro God, that on the wall
Wrote *Mane techel phares*, truſteth me;
Thy regne is don, thou weyeſt nought at all;
Divided is thy regne, and it ſhal be
To Medes and to Perſes yeven, quod he.
And thilke ſame night this king was ſlawe;
And Darius occupied his degree,
Though he therto had neither right ne lawe.

Lordinges, enſample hereby moun ye take,
How that in lordſhip is no ſikerneſſe:
For whan that fortune wol a man forſake,
She bereth away his regne and his richeſſe,
And eke his frendes, bothe more and leſſe.
For what man that hath frendes thurgh fortune,
Miſhap wol make hem enemies, I geſſe.
This proverbe is ful ſoth, and ful commune.

Zenobia.

Zenobia, of Palmerie the quene,
(As writen Perſiens of hire nobleſſe)

So

So worthy was in armes, and ſo kene,
That no wight paſſed hire in hardineſſe,
Ne in linage, ne in other gentilleſſe.
Of kinges blood of Perſe is ſhe deſcended;
I ſay not that ſhe hadde moſt faireneſſe,
But of hire ſhape ſhe might not ben amended.

From hire childhode I finde that ſhe fledde
Office of woman, and to wode ſhe went;
And many a wilde hartes blood ſhe ſhedde
With arwes brode that ſhe to hem ſent;
She was ſo ſwift, that ſhe anon hem hent.
And whan that ſhe was elder, ſhe wold kille
Leons, lepards, and beres al to-rent,
And in hire armes weld hem at hire wille.

She dorſt the wilde beſtes dennes ſeke,
And rennen in the mountaignes all the night,
And ſlepe under the buſh; and ſhe coud eke
Wraſtlen by veray force and veray might
With any yong man, were he never ſo wight;
Ther mighte nothing in hire armes ſtonde;
She kept hire maidenhode from every wight,
To no man deigned hire for to be bonde.

But at the laſt hire frendes han hire maried
To Odenat, a prince of that contree;

Al

Al were it ſo, that ſhe hem longe taried.
And ye ſhul underſtonden, how that he
Hadde ſwiche fantaſies as hadde ſhe;
But natheles, whan they were knit in fere,
They lived in joye, and in felicitee,
For eche of hem had other lefe and dere.

Save o thing, that ſhe n'olde never aſſente,
By no way, that he ſhulde by hire lie
But ones, for it was hire plaine entente
To have a childe, the world to multiplie:
And al ſo ſone as that ſhe might eſpie,
That ſhe was not with childe with that dede,
Than would ſhe ſuffer him don his fantaſie
Eftſone, and not but ones out of drede.

And if ſhe were with child at thilke caſt,
No more ſhuld he playen thilke game
Till fully fourty dayes weren paſt:
Than wold ſhe ones ſuffre him do the ſame.
Al were this Odenate wild or tame,
He gate no more of hire, for thus ſhe ſayde,
It was to wives lecherie and ſhame,
In other cas if that men with hem playde.

Two ſones by this Odenate had ſhe,
The which ſhe kept in vertue and lettrure.

But now unto our tale turne we:
I ſay, ſo worſhipful a creature,
And wiſe therwith, and large with meſure,
So penible in the werre, and curteis eke,
Ne more labour might in werre endure,
Was non, though al this world men ſhulden ſeke.

Hire riche array ne mighte not be told,
As wel in veſſell as in hire clothing:
She was al clad in pierrie and in gold,
And eke ſhe lefte not for non hunting
To have of ſondry tonges ful knowing,
Whan that ſhe leiſer had, and for to entend
To lernen bookes was all hire liking,
How ſhe in vertue might hire lif diſpend.

And ſhortly of this ſtorie for to trete,
So doughty was hire huſbond and eke ſhe,
That they conquered many regnes grete
In the Orient, with many a faire citee,
Appertenaunt unto the majeſtee
Of Rome, and with ſtrong hand held hem ful faſt,
Ne never might hir fomen don hem flee,
Ay while that Odenates dayes laſt.

Hire batailles, who ſo liſt hem for to rede,
Againe Sapor the king, and other mo,

And

And how that all this proceſſe fell in dede,
Why ſhe conquered, and what title therto,
And after of hire miſchefe and hire wo,
How that ſhe was beſeged, and ytake,
Let him unto my maiſter Petrark go,
That writeth ynough of this, I undertake.

Whan Odenate was ded, ſhe mightily
The regnes held, and with hire propre hond
Agains hire fos ſhe fought ſo cruelly,
That ther n'as king ne prince in all that lond,
That he n'as glad, if he that grace fond
That ſhe ne wolde upon his lond werreye:
With hire they maden alliaunce by bond
To ben in pees, and let hire ride and pleye.

The emperour of Rome Claudius,
Ne, him beforn, the Romain Galien
Ne dorſte never be ſo corageous,
Ne non Ermin, ne non Egiptien,
Ne Surrien, ne non Arabien
Within the feld ne dorſte with hire fight,
Leſt that ſhe wold hem with hire hondes ſlen,
Or with hire meinie putten hem to flight.

In kinges habite wente hire ſones two,
As heires of hir fadres regnes alle,

And Heremanno and Timolao
Hir names were, as Perſiens hem calle.
But ay fortune hath in hire hony galle:
This mighty quene may no while endure,
Fortune out of hire regne made hire falle
To wretchedneſſe, and to miſaventure.

Aurelian, whan that the governance
Of Rome came into his hondes twey,
He ſhope upon this quene to do vengeance,
And with his legions he toke his way
Toward Zenobie, and ſhortly for to ſay,
He made hire flee, and atte laſt hire hent,
And fettred hire, and eke hire children tway,
And wan the lond, and home to Rome he went.

Amonges other thinges that he wan,
Hire char, that was with gold wrought and pierrie,
This grete Romain, this Aurelian
Hath with him lad, for that men ſhuld it ſee.
Beforen his triumphe walketh ſhe
With gilte chaines on hire necke honging,
Crouned ſhe was, as after hire degree,
And ful of pierrie charged hire clothing.

Alas fortune! ſhe that whilom was
Dredeful to kinges and to emperoures,
Now gaureth all the peple on hire, alas!

And

And ſhe that helmed was in ſtarke ſtoures,
And wan by force tounes ſtronge and toures,
Shal on hire hed now were a vitremite:
And ſhe that bare the ſceptre ful of floures,
Shal bere a diſtaf hire coſt for to quite.

Nero.

Although that Nero were as vicious,
As any fend, that lith ful low adoun,
Yet he, as telleth us Suetonius,
This wide world had in ſubjectioun,
Both Eſt and Weſt, South and Septentrioun.
Of rubies, ſaphires, and of perles white
Were all his clothes brouded up and doun,
For he in gemmes gretly gan delite.

More delicat, more pompous of array,
More proude, was never emperour than he;
That ilke cloth that he had wered o day,
After that time he n'olde it never ſee;
Nettes of gold threde had he gret plentee,
To fiſh in Tiber, whan him liſt to play;
His luſtes were as law, in his degree,
For fortune as his frend wold him obay.

He Rome brente for his delicacie;
The ſenatours he ſlow upon a day,

To heren how that men wold wepe and crie;
And ſlow his brother, and by his ſuſter lay.
His moder made he in pitous array,
For he hire wombe let ſlitten, to behold
Wher he conceived was, ſo wala wa!
That he ſo litel of his moder told.

No tere out of his eyen for that ſight
Ne came, but ſayd, a faire woman was ſhe.
Gret wonder is, how that he coud or might
Be domeſman of hire dede beautee:
The wine to bringen him commanded he,
And dranke anon, non other wo he made.
Whan might is joined unto crueltee,
Alas! to depe wol the venime wade.

In youthe a maiſter had this emperour
To techen him lettrure and curteſie,
For of moralitee he was the flour,
As in his time, but if bookes lie.
And while this maiſter had of him maiſtrie,
He maked him ſo conning and ſo ſouple,
That longe time it was, or tyrannie,
Or any vice dorſt in him uncouple.

This Seneka, of which that I deviſe,
Becauſe Nero had of him ſwiche drede,

For

For he fro vices wold him ay chaſtiſe
Diſcretly, as by word, and not by dede,
Sire, he wold ſay, an emperour mote nede
Be vertuous, and haten tyrannie.
For which he made him in a bathe to blede
On bothe his armes, till he muſte die.

This Nero had eke of a cuſtumaunce
In youth ageins his maiſter for to riſe;
Which afterward him thought a gret grevaunce,
Therfore he made him dien in this wiſe.
But natheles this Seneka the wiſe
Chees in a bathe to die in this manere,
Rather than han another turmentiſe:
And thus hath Nero ſlain his maiſter dere.

Now fell it ſo, that fortune liſt no lenger
The highe pride of Nero to cherice:
For though that he were ſtrong, yet was ſhe ſtrenger.
She thoughte thus; by God I am to nice
To ſet a man, that is fulfilled of vice,
In high degree, and emperour him calle:
By God out of his ſete I wol him trice,
Whan he leſt weneth, ſoneſt ſhal he falle.

The peple roſe upon him on a night
For his defaute, and whan he it eſpied,

Out of his dores anon he hath him dight
Alone, and ther he wend han ben allied,
He knocked faſt, and ay the more he cried,
The faſter ſhetten they hir dores alle:
Tho wiſt he wel he had himſelf miſgied,
And went his way, no lenger dorſt he calle.

The peple cried and rombled up and doun,
That with his eres herd he how they ſayde,
Wher is this falſe tyrant, this Neroun?
For fere almoſt out of his wit he brayde,
And to his goddes pitouſly he preide
For ſocour, but it mighte not betide:
For drede of this him thoughte that he deide,
And ran into a gardin him to hide.

And in this gardin fond he cherles tweye
That ſaten by a fire gret and red,
And to thiſe cherles two he gan to preye
To ſlen him, and to girden of his hed,
That to his body, whan that he were ded,
Were no deſpit ydon for his defame.
Himſelf he ſlow, he coud no better rede,
Of which fortune lough and hadde a game.

Holofernes.

Was never capitaine under a king,
That regnes mo put in ſubjectioun,

Ne

Ne ſtrenger was in feld of alle thing
As in his time, ne greter of renoun,
Ne more pompous in high preſumptioun,
Than Holoferne, which that fortune ay kiſt
So likerouſly, and lad him up and doun,
Til that his hed was of, or that he wiſt.

Not only that this world had him in awe
For leſing of richeſſe and libertee;
But he made every man reneie his lawe.
Nabuchodonoſor was God, ſayd he;
Non other God ne ſhulde honoured be.
Ageins his heſte ther dare no wight treſpace,
Save in Bethulia, a ſtrong citee,
Wher Eliachim a preeſt was of that place.

But take kepe of the deth of Holoferne:
Amid his hoſt he dronken lay a night
Within his tente, large as is a berne;
And yet for all his pompe and all his might,
Judith, a woman, as he lay upright
Sleping, his hed of ſmote, and fro his tente
Ful prively ſhe ſtale from every wight,
And with his hed unto hire toun ſhe wente.

Antiochus.

What nedeth it of king Antiochus
To tell his high and real majeſtee,

His

His gret pride, and his werkes venimous?
For ſwiche another was ther non as he;
Redeth what that he was in Machabe,
And redeth the proud wordes that he ſeid,
And why he fell from his proſperitee,
And in an hill how wretchedly he deid.

Fortune him had enhaunſed ſo in pride,
That veraily he wend he might attaine
Unto the ſterres upon every ſide,
And in a balaunce weyen eche mountaine,
And all the floodes of the ſee reſtreine:
And Goddes peple had he moſt in hate,
Hem wold he ſleen in turment and in peine,
Wening that God ne might his pride abate.

And for that Nichanor and Timothee
With Jewes were venquiſhed mightily,
Unto the Jewes ſwiche an hate had he,
That he bad greithe his char ful haſtily,
And ſwore and ſayde ful deſpitouſly,
Unto Jeruſalem he wold eftſone
To wreke his ire on it ful cruelly,
But of his purpos was he let ful ſone.

God for his manace him ſo ſore ſmote,
With inviſible wound, ay incurable,

That

That in his guttes carfe it ſo and bote,
Til that his peines weren importable;
And certainly the wreche was reſonable,
For many a mannes guttes did he peine;
But from his purpos, curſed and damnable,
For all his ſmerte, he n'olde him not reſtreine:

But bade anon apparailen his hoſt.
And ſodenly, or he was of it ware,
God daunted all his pride, and all his boſt;
For he ſo ſore fell out of his chare,
That it his limmes and his ſkinne to-tare,
So that he neither mighte go ne ride;
But in a chaiere men about him bare,
Alle forbruſed bothe bak and ſide.

The wreche of God him ſmote ſo cruelly,
That thurgh his body wicked wormes crept,
And therwithal he ſtanke ſo horribly,
That non of all his meinie that him kept,
Whether ſo that he woke or elles ſlept,
Ne mighte not of him the ſtinke endure.
In this miſchiefe he wailed and eke wept,
And knew God, Lord of every creature.

To all his hoſt, and to himſelf alſo
Ful wlatſom was the ſtinke of his careine;

No

No man ne mighte him beren to ne fro.
And in this ſtinke, and this horrible peine,
He ſtarf ful wretchedly in a mountaine.
Thus hath this robbour, and this homicide,
That many a man made to wepe and pleine,
Swiche guerdon, as belongeth unto pride.

Alexander.

The ſtorie of Alexandre is ſo commune,
That every wight, that hath diſcretioun,
Hath herd ſomwhat or all of his fortune.
This wide world, as in concluſioun,
He wan by ſtrength, or for his high renoun
They weren glad for pees unto him ſende.
The pride of man and boſt he layd adoun,
Wher ſo he came, unto the worldes ende.

Compariſon might never yet be maked
Betwix him and another conquerour,
For al this world for drede of him hath quaked;
He was of knighthode and of fredome flour;
Fortune him maked the heir of hire honour.
Save wine and women, nothing might aſſwage
His high entente in armes and labour,
So was he ful of leonin corage.

What

What pris were it to him, though I you told
Of Darius, and an hundred thouſand mo,
Of kinges, princes, dukes, erles bold,
Which he conquered, and brought hem into wo?
I ſay, as fer as man may ride or go
The world was his, what ſhuld I more deviſe?
For though I wrote or told you ever mo
Of his knighthode, it mighte not ſuffice.

Twelf yere he regned, as ſaith Machabe;
Philippus ſone of Macedoine he was,
That firſt was king in Grece the contree.
O worthy gentil Alexandre, alas
That ever ſhuld thee fallen ſwiche a cas!
Enpoiſoned of thyn owen folke thou were;
Thy ſis fortune hath turned into an as,
And yet for thee ne wept ſhe never a tere.

Who ſhal me yeven teres to complaine
The deth of gentilleſſe, and of fraunchiſe,
That all this world welded in his demaine,
And yet him thought it mighte not ſuffice?
So ful was his corage of high empriſe.
Alas! who ſhal me helpen to endite
Falſe fortune, and poiſon to deſpiſe?
The whiche two of all this wo I wite.

Julius Ceſar.

By wiſdome, manhode, and by gret labour,
From humblehede to real majeſtee
Up roſe he Julius the conquerour,
That wan all the occident, by lond and ſee,
By ſtrengthe of hond, or elles by tretee,
And unto Rome made hem tributarie;
And ſith of Rome the emperour was he,
Til that fortune wexe his adverſarie.

O mighty Ceſar, that in Theſſalie
Ageins Pompeius father thin in lawe,
That of the orient had all the chivalrie,
As fer as that the day beginneth dawe,
Thou thurgh thy knighthode haſt hem take and ſlawe,
Save fewe folk, that with Pompeius fledde,
Thurgh which thou put all the orient in awe,
Thanke fortune, that ſo wel thee ſpedde.

But now a litel while I wol bewaile
This Pompeius, this noble governour
Of Rome, which that fled at this bataille.
I ſay, on of his men, a falſe traitour,
His hed of ſmote, to winnen him favour
Of Julius, and him the hed he brought:
Alas, Pompeie, of the orient conquerour,
That fortune unto ſwiche a fin thee brought!

To

To Rome again repaireth Julius
With his triumphe laureat ful hie,
But on a time Brutus and Caſſius,
That ever had of his high eſtat envie,
Ful prively had made conſpiracie
Ageins this Julius in ſotil wiſe:
And caſt the place, in which he ſhulde die
With bodekins, as I ſhal you deviſe.

This Julius to the capitolie wente
Upon a day, as he was wont to gon,
And in the capitolie anon him hente
This falſe Brutus, and his other foon,
And ſtiked him with bodekins anon
With many a wound, and thus they let him lie:
But never gront he at no ſtroke but on,
Or elles at two, but if his ſtorie lie.

So manly was this Julius of herte,
And ſo wel loved eſtatly honeſtee,
That though his dedly woundes ſore ſmerte,
His mantel over his hippes caſte he,
For no man ſhulde ſeen his privetee:
And as he lay of dying in a trance,
And wiſte verily that ded was he,
Of honeſtee yet had he remembrance.

Lucan, to thee this ſtorie I recommende,
And to Sueton, and Valerie alſo,
That of this ſtorie writen word and ende:
How that to thiſe gret conqueroures two
Fortune was firſt a frend, and ſith a fo.
No man ne truſt upon hire favour long,
But have hire in await for evermo;
Witneſſe on all thiſe cónqueroures ſtrong.

Creſus.

The riche Creſus, whilom king of Lide,
Of whiche Creſus, Cirus him ſore dradde,
Yet was he caught amiddes all his pride,
And to be brent men to the fire him ladde;
But ſwiche a rain doun from the welken ſhadde,
That ſlow the fire, and made to him eſcape:
But to beware no grace yet he hadde,
Til fortune on the galwes made him gape.

ſore him

Whan he eſcaped was, he can not ſtint
For to beginne a newe werre again:
He wened wel, for that fortune him ſent
Swiche hap, that he eſcaped thurgh the rain,
That of his foos he mighte not be ſlain;
And eke a ſweven upon a night he mette,
Of which he was ſo proud, and eke ſo fain,
That in vengeance he all his herte ſette.

Upon

Upon a tree he was, as that him thought,
Ther Jupiter him wesshe, both bak and side;
And Phebus eke a faire towail him brought
To drie him with, and therfore wex his pride.
And to his doughter that stood him beside,
Which that he knew in high science habound,
He bad hire tell him what it signified,
And she his dreme began right thus expound.

The tree (quod she) the galwes is to mene,
And Jupiter betokeneth snow and rain,
And Phebus with his towail clere and clene,
Tho ben the sonnes stremes, soth to sain:
Thou shalt anhanged be, fader, certain;
Rain shal thee wash, and sonne shal thee drie.
Thus warned him ful plat and eke ful plain
His doughter, which that called was Phanie.

Anhanged was Cresus the proude king,
His real trone might him not availle:
Tragedie is non other maner thing,
Ne can in singing crien ne bewaile,
But for that fortune all day wol assaille
With unware stroke the regnes that ben proude:
For whan men trusten hire, than wol she faille,
And cover hire bright face with a cloude.

Peter of Spaine.

O noble, o worthy Petro, glorie of Spaine,
Whom fortune held ſo high in majeſtee,
Wel oughten men thy pitous deth complaine.
Out of thy lond thy brother made thee flee,
And after at a ſege by ſotiltee
Thou were betraied, and lad unto his tent,
Wher as he with his owen hond ſlow thee,
Succeding in thy regne and in thy rent.

The feld of ſnow, with th'egle of blak therin,
Caught with the limerod, coloured as the glede,
He brewed this curſedneſſe, and all this ſinne;
The wicked neſte was werker of this dede;
Not Charles Oliver, that toke ay hede
Of trouthe and honour, but of Armorike
Genilon Oliver, corrupt for mede,
Broughte this worthy king in ſwiche a brike.

Petro, king of Cypre.

O worthy Petro king of Cypre alſo,
That Alexandrie wan by high maiſtrie,
Ful many an hethen wroughteſt thou ful wo,
Of which thin owen lieges had envie:

And

And for no thing but for thy chivalrie,
They in thy bed han ſlain thee by the morwe;
Thus can fortune hire whele governe and gie,
And out of joye bringen men to ſorwe.

Barnabo Viſcount.

Of Milane grete Barnabo Viſcount,
God of delit, and ſcourge of Lumbardie,
Why ſhuld I not thin infortune account,
Sith in eſtat thou clomben were ſo high?
Thy brothers ſone, that was thy double allie,
For he thy nevew was, and ſone in lawe,
Within his priſon made he thee to die,
But why, ne how, n'ot I that thou were ſlawe.

Hugelin of Piſe.

Of the erl Hugelin of Piſe the langour
Ther may no tonge tellen for pitee.
But litel out of Piſe ſtant a tour,
In whiche tour in priſon yput was he,
And with him ben his litel children three,
The eldeſt ſcarſely five yere was of age:
Alas! fortune, it was gret crueltee
Swiche briddes for to put in ſwiche a cage.

Dampned was he to die in that priſon,
For Roger, which that biſhop was of Piſe,

Had on him made a falſe ſuggeſtion,
Thurgh which the peple gan upon him riſe,
And put him in priſon, in ſwiche a wiſe,
As ye han herd; and mete and drinke he had
So ſmale, that wel unnethe it may ſuffiſe,
And therwithal it was ful poure and bad.

And on a day befell, that in that houre,
Whan that his mete wont was to be brought,
The gailer ſhette the dores of the toure;
He hered it wel, but he ſpake right nought.
And in his herte anon ther fell a thought,
That they for hunger wolden do him dien;
Alas! quod he, alas that I was wrought!
Therwith the teres fellen fro his eyen.

His yonge ſone, that three yere was of age,
Unto him ſaid, fader, why do ye wepe?
Whan will the gailer bringen our potage?
Is ther no morſel bred that ye do kepe?
I am ſo hungry, that I may not ſlepe.
Now wolde God that I might ſlepen ever,
Than ſhuld not hunger in my wombe crepe;
Ther n'is no thing, ſauf bred, that me were lever.

Thus day by day this childe began to crie,
Til in his fadres barme adoun it lay,

And

And ſaide, farewel, fader, I mote die;
And kiſt his fader, and dide the ſame day.
And whan the woful fader did it ſey,
For wo his armes two he gan to bite,
And ſaide, alas! fortune, and wala wa!
Thy falſe whele my wo all may I wite.

His children wenden, that for hunger it was
That he his armes gnowe, and not for wo,
And ſayden: fader, do not ſo, alas!
But rather ete the fleſh upon us two.
Our fleſh thou yaf us, take our fleſh us fro,
And ete ynough: right thus they to him ſeide,
And after that, within a day or two,
They laide hem in his lappe adoun, and deide.

Himſelf diſpeired eke for hunger ſtarf.
Thus ended is this mighty Erl of Piſe:
From high eſtat fortune away him carf.
Of this tragedie it ought ynough ſuffice;
Who ſo wol here it in a longer wiſe,
Redeth the grete poete of Itaille,
That highte Dante, for he can it deviſe
Fro point to point, not o word wol he faille.

THE NONNES PREESTES PROLOGUE.

Ho! quod the knight, good ſire, no more of this:
That ye han ſaid, is right ynough ywis,

And mochel more; for litel hevineſſe
Is right ynough to mochel folk, I geſſe.
I ſay for me, it is a gret diſeſe,
Wher as men have ben in gret welth and eſe,
To heren of hir ſoden fall, alas!
And the contrary is joye and gret ſolas,
As whan a man hath ben in poure eſtat,
And climbeth up, and wexeth fortunat,
And ther abideth in proſperitee:
Swiche thing is gladſom, as it thinketh me,
And of ſwiche thing were goodly for to telle.
Ye, quod our hoſte, by Seint Poules belle,
Ye ſay right ſoth; this monk hath clapped loude:
He ſpake, how fortune covered with a cloude
I wote not what, and als of a tragedie
Right now ye herd: and parde no remedie
It is for to bewailen, ne complaine
That that is don, and als it is a paine,
As ye han ſaid, to here of hevineſſe.
Sire monk, no more of this, ſo God you bleſſe;
Your tale anoyeth all this compagnie;
Swiche talking is not worth a boterflie,
For therin is ther no diſport ne game:
Therfore, ſire monk, dan Piers by your name,
I pray you hertely, tell us ſomwhat elles,
For ſikerly, n'ere clinking of your belles,

That

That on your bridel hange on every ſide,
By heven king, that for us alle dide,
I ſhuld er this have fallen doun for ſlepe,
Although the ſlough had ben never ſo depe:
Than hadde your tale all ben tolde in vain.
For certainly, as that thiſe clerkes ſain,
Wher as a man may have non audience,
Nought helpeth it to tellen his ſentence.
And wel I wote the ſubſtance is in me,
If any thing ſhal wel reported be.
Sire, ſay ſomwhat of hunting, I you pray.
Nay, quod this Monk, I have no luſt to play:
Now let another telle as I have told.
Than ſpake our hoſte with rude ſpeche and bold,
And ſayd unto the Nonnes Preeſt anon,
Come nere thou preeſt, come hither thou Sire John,
Telle us ſwiche thing, as may our hertes glade.
Be blithe, although thou ride upon a jade.
What though thyn horſe be bothe foule and lene,
If he wol ſerve thee, recke thee not a bene:
Loke that thyn herte be mery evermo.
Yes, hoſte, quod he, ſo mote I ride or go,
But I be mery, ywis I wol be blamed.
And right anon his tale he hath attamed;
And thus he ſaid unto us everich on,
This ſwete preeſt, this goodly man Sire John.

THE NONNES PREESTES TALE.

A POURE widewe ſomdel ſtoupen in age,
Was whilom dwelling in a narwe cotage,
Beſide a grove, ſtonding in a dale,
This widewe, which I tell you of my tale,
Sin thilke day that ſhe was laſt a wif,
In patience led a ful ſimple lif.
For litel was hire catel and hire rente:
By huſbondry of ſwiche as God hire ſente,
She found hireſelf, and eke hire doughtren two.
Three large ſowes had ſhe, and no mo:
Three kine, and eke a ſheep that highte Malle.
Ful ſooty was hire boure, and eke hire halle,
In which ſhe ete many a ſlender mele.
Of poinant ſauce ne knew ſhe never a dele.
No deintee morſel paſſed thurgh hire throte;
Hire diete was accordant to hire cote.
Repletion ne made hire never ſike;
Attempre diete was all hire phyſike,
And exerciſe, and hertes ſuffiſance.
The goute let hire nothing for to dance,
Ne apoplexie ſhente not hire hed.
No win ne dranke ſhe, neyther white ne red:
Hire bord was ſerved moſt with white and black,
Milk and broun bred, in which ſhe fond no lack,

Seinde

Seinde bacon, and ſomtime an ey or twey;
For ſhe was as it were a maner dey.
A yerd ſhe had, encloſed all about
With ſtickes, and a drie diche without,
In which ſhe had a cok highte Chaunteclere,
In all the land of crowing n'as his pere.
His vois was merier than the mery orgon,
On maſſe daies that in the chirches gon.
Wel ſikerer was his crowing in his loge,
Than is a clok, or any abbey orloge.
By nature he knew eche aſcentioun
Of the equinoctial in thilke toun;
For whan degrees fiftene were aſcended,
Than crew he, that it might not ben amended.
His combe was redder than the fin corall,
Enbattelled, as it were a caſtel wall.
His bill was black, and as the jet it ſhone;
Like aſure were his legges and his tone;
His nailes whiter than the lily flour,
And like the burned gold was his colour.
This gentil cok had in his governance
Seven hennes, for to don all his pleſance,
Which were his ſuſters and his paramoures,
And wonder like to him, as of coloures.
Of which the faireſt hewed in the throte,
Was cleped faire damoſelle Pertelote.

Curteis

Curteis ſhe was, diſcrete, and debonaire,
And compenable, and bare hireſelf ſo faire,
Sithen the day that ſhe was ſevennight old,
That trewelich ſhe hath the herte in hold
Of Chaunteclere, loken in every lith:
He loved hire ſo, that wel was him therwith.
But ſwiche a joye it was to here hem ſing,
Whan that the brighte ſonne gan to ſpring,
In ſwete accord: my lefe is fare in lond.
For thilke time, as I have underſtond,
Beſtes and briddes couden ſpeke and ſing.
And ſo befell, that in a dawening,
As Chaunteclere among his wives alle
Sate on his perche, that was in the halle,
And next him ſate his faire Pertelote,
This Chaunteclere gan gronen in his throte,
As man that in his dreme is dretched ſore.
And whan that Pertelote thus herd him rore,
She was agaſt, and ſaide, herte dere,
What aileth you to grone in this manere?
Ye ben a veray ſleper, fy for ſhame.
And he anſwered and ſayde thus; madame,
I pray you, that ye take it not agrefe:
By God me mette I was in ſwiche miſchefe
Right now, that yet min herte is ſore afright.
Now God (quod he) my ſweven recche aright,

And kepe my body out of foule priſoun.
Me mette, how that I romed up and doun
Within our yerde, wher as I ſaw a beſte,
Was like an hound, and wold han made areſte
Upon my body, and han had me ded.
His colour was betwix yelwe and red;
And tipped was his tail, and both his eres
With black, unlike the remenant of his heres.
His ſnout was ſmal, with glowing eyen twey:
Yet for his loke almoſt for fere I dey:
This cauſed me my groning douteles.
Away, quod ſhe, fy on you herteles.
Alas! quod ſhe, for by that God above
Now han ye loſt myn herte and all my love;
I cannot love a coward by my faith.
For certes, what ſo any woman ſaith,
We all deſiren, if it mighte be,
To have an huſbond, hardy, wiſe and free,
And ſecree, and non niggard ne no fool,
Ne him that is agaſt of every tool,
Ne non avantour by that God above.
How dorſten ye for ſhame ſay to your love,
That any thing might maken you aferde?
Han ye no mannes herte, and han a berde?
Alas! and con ye ben agaſt of ſwevenis?
Nothing but vanitee, god wote, in ſweven is.

Swevenes

Swevenes engendren of repletions,
And oft of fume, and of complexions,
Whan humours ben to habundant in a wight.
Certes this dreme, which ye han met to-night,
Cometh of the grete ſuperfluitee
Of youre rede *colera* parde,
Which cauſeth folk to dreden in hir dremes
Of arwes, and of fire with rede lemes,
Of rede beſtes, that they wol hem bite,
Of conteke, and of waſpes gret and lite;
Right as the humour of melancolie
Cauſeth ful many a man in ſlepe to crie,
For fere of bolles, and of beres blake,
Or elles that blake devils wol hem take.
Of other humours coud I telle alſo,
That werken many a man in ſlepe moch wo;
But I wol paſſe, as lightly as I can.
Lo Caton, which that was ſo wiſe a man,
Said he not thus? Ne do no force of dremes.
Now, Sire, quod ſhe, whan we flee fro the bemes,
For Goddes love, as take ſom laxatif:
Up peril of my ſoule, and of my lif,
I conſeil you the beſt, I wol not lie,
That both of coler, and of melancolie
Ye purge you; and for ye ſhul not tarie,
Though in this toun be non apotecarie,

I ſhal

I ſhal myſelf two herbes techen you,
That ſhal be for your hele, and for your prow;
And in our yerde, the herbes ſhall I finde,
The which han of hir propretee by kinde
To purgen you benethe, and eke above.
Sire, forgete not this for Goddes love;
Ye ben ful colerike of complexion;
Ware that the ſonne in his aſcention
Ne finde you not replete of humours hote:
And if it do, I dare wel lay a grote,
That ye ſhul han a fever tertiane,
Or elles an ague, that may be your bane.
A day or two ye ſhul han digeſtives
Of wormes, or ye take your laxatives,
Of laureole, centaurie, and fumetere,
Or elles of ellebor, that groweth there,
Of catapuce, or of gaitre beries,
Or herbe ive growing in our yerd, that mery is:
Picke hem right as they grow, and ete hem in.
Beth mery, huſbond, for your fader kin,
Dredeth no dreme, I can ſay you no more.
Madame, quod he, *grand mercy* of your lore.
But natheles, as touching dan Caton,
That hath of wiſdome ſwiche a gret renoun,
Though that he bade no dremes for to drede,
By God, men moun in olde bookes rede,

Of

Of many a man, more of auctoritee
Than ever Caton was, ſo mote I the,
That all the revers ſayn of his ſentence,
And han wel founden by experience,
That dremes ben ſignifications
As wel of joye, as tribulations,
That folk enduren in this lif preſent.
Ther nedeth make of this non argument;
The veray preve ſheweth it indede.
On of the greteſt auctours that men rede,
Saith thus; that whilom twey felawes wente
On pilgrimage in a ful good entente;
And happed ſo, they came into a toun,
Wher ther was ſwiche a congregatioun
Of peple, and eke ſo ſtreit of herbergage,
That they ne founde as moche as a cotage,
In which they bothe might ylogged be:
Wherfore they muſten of neceſſitee,
As for that night, departen compagnie;
And eche of hem goth to his hoſtelrie,
And toke his logging as it wolde falle.
That on of hem was logged in a ſtalle,
Fer in a yerd, with oxen of the plough;
That other man was logged wel ynough,
As was his aventure, or his fortune,
That us governeth all, as in commune.

And

And ſo befell, that, long or it were day,
This man met in his bed, ther as he lay,
How that his felaw gan upon him calle,
And ſaid, alas! for in an oxes ſtalle
This night ſhal I be mordred, ther I lie.
Now helpe me, dere brother, or I die;
In alle haſte come to me, he ſaide.
This man out of his ſlepe for fere abraide;
But whan that he was waked of his ſlepe,
He turned him, and toke of this no kepe;
Him thought his dreme was but a vanitee.
Thus twies in his ſleping dremed he.
And at the thridde time yet his felaw
Came, as him thought, and ſaid, I now am ſlaw:
Behold my blody woundes, depe and wide.
Ariſe up erly, in the morwe tide,
And at the Weſt gate of the toun (quod he)
A carte ful of donge ther ſhalt thou ſee,
In which my body is hid prively.
Do thilke carte arreſten boldely.
My gold cauſed my mordre, ſoth to ſain.
And told him every point how he was ſlain
With a ful pitous face, pale of hewe.
And truſteth wel, his dreme he found ful trewe.
For on the morwe, as ſone as it was day,
To his felawes inne he toke his way:

And

And whan that he came to this oxes ſtalle,
After his felaw he began to calle.
The hoſteler anſwered him anon,
And ſaide, Sire, your felaw is agon,
As ſone as day he went out of the toun.
This man gan fallen in ſuſpecioun
Remembring on his dremes that he mette,
And forth he goth, no lenger wold he lette,
Unto the Weſt gate of the toun, and fond
A dong carte, as it went for to dong lond,
That was arraied in the ſame wiſe
As ye han herde the dede man deviſe:
And with an hardy herte he gan to crie,
Vengeance and juſtice of this felonie;
My felaw mordred is this ſame night,
And in this carte he lith, gaping upright.
I crie out on the miniſtres, quod he,
That ſhulden kepe and reulen this citee:
Harow! alas! here lith my felaw ſlain.
What ſhuld I more unto this tale fain?
The peple out ſtert, and caſt the cart to ground,
And in the middel of the dong they found
The dede man, that mordred was all newe.
O blisful God, that art ſo good and trewe,
Lo, how that thou bewreyeſt mordre alway.
Mordre wol out, that ſee we day by day.

Mordre

Mordre is ſo wlatſom and abhominable
To God, that is ſo juſt and reſonable,
That he ne wol not ſuffre it hylled be:
Though it abide a yere, or two, or three,
Mordre wol out, this is my concluſioun.
And right anon, the miniſtres of the toun
Han hent the carter, and ſo ſore him pined,
And eke the hoſteler ſo ſore engined,
That they beknew hir wickedneſſe anon,
And were anhanged by the necke bon.
Here moun ye ſee that dremes ben to drede.
And certes in the ſame book I rede,
Right in the nexte chapitre after this,
(I gabbe not, ſo have I joye and blis)
Two men that wold han paſſed over the ſee
For certain cauſe in to a fer contree,
If that the wind ne hadde ben contrarie,
That made hem in a citee for to tarie,
That ſtood ful mery upon an haven ſide.
But on a day, agein the even tide,
The wind gan change, and blew right as hem leſt.
Jolif and glad they wenten to hir reſt,
And caſten hem ful erly for to ſaile;
But to that o man fell a gret mervaile.
That on of hem in ſleping as he lay,
He mette a wonder dreme, again the day:

Him thought a man ſtood by his beddes ſide,
And him commanded, that he ſhuld abide,
And ſaid him thus; if thou to-morwe wende,
Thou ſhalt be dreint; my tale is at an ende.
He woke, and told his felaw what he met,
And praied him his viage for to let,
As for that day, he prayd him for to abide.
His felaw that lay by his beddes ſide,
Gan for to laugh, and ſcorned him ful faſte.
No dreme, quod he, may ſo my herte agaſte,
That I wol leten for to do my thinges.
I ſette not a ſtraw by thy dreminges,
For ſwevens ben but vanitees and japes.
Men dreme al day of oules and of apes,
And eke of many a maſe therwithal;
Men dreme of thing that never was, ne ſhal.
But ſith I ſee that thou wolt here abide,
And thus forſlouthen wilfully thy tide,
God wot it reweth me, and have good day.
And thus he took his leve, and went his way.
But or that he had half his cours yſailed,
N'ot I not why, ne what meſchance it ailed,
But caſuelly the ſhippes bottom rente,
And ſhip and man under the water wente
In ſight of other ſhippes ther beſide,
That with him ſailed at the ſame tide.

And

And therfore, faire Pertelote ſo dere,
By ſwiche enſamples olde maiſt thou lere,
That no man ſhulde be to reccheles
Of dremes, for I ſay thee douteles,
That many a dreme ful ſore is for to drede.
Lo, in the lif of ſeint Kenelme, I rede,
That was Kenulphus ſone, the noble king
Of Mercenrike, how Kenelm mette a thing.
A litel or he were mordred on a day,
His mordre in his aviſion he ſay.
His norice him expouned every del
His ſweven, and bade him for to kepe him wel
Fro treſon; but he n'as but ſeven yere old,
And therfore litel tale hath he told
Of any dreme, ſo holy was his herte.
By God I hadde lever than my ſherte,
That ye had red his legend, as have I.
Dame Pertelote, I ſay you trewely,
Macrobius, that writ the aviſion
In Affrike of the worthy Scipion,
Affirmeth dremes, and ſayth that they ben
Warning of thinges, that men after ſeen.
And forthermore, I pray you loketh wel
In the olde Teſtament, of Daniel,
If he held dremes any vanitee.
Rede eke of Joſeph, and ther ſhuln ye ſee

Wher dremes ben ſomtime (I ſay not alle)
Warning of thinges that ſhuln after falle.
Loke of Egipt the king, dan Pharao,
His baker and his boteler alſo,
Wheder they ne felten non effect in dremes.
Who ſo wol ſeken actes of ſondry remes,
May rede of dremes many a wonder thing.
Lo Creſus, which that was of Lydie king,
Mette he not that he ſat upon a tree,
Which ſignified he ſhuld anhanged be?
Lo hire Andromacha, Hectores wif,
That day that Hector ſhulde leſe his lif,
She dremed on the ſame night beforne,
How that the lif of Hector ſhuld be lorne,
If thilke day he went into bataille:
She warned him, but it might not availle;
He went forth for to fighten natheles,
And was yſlain anon of Achilles.
But thilke tale is al to long to telle,
And eke it is nigh day, I may not dwelle.
Shortly I ſay, as for concluſion,
That I ſhal han of this aviſion
Adverſitee: and I ſay forthermore,
That I ne tell of laxatives no ſtore,
For they ben venimous, I wot it wel:
I hem deffie, I love hem never a del.

But

But let us ſpeke of mirthe, and ſtinte all this;
Madame Pertelote, ſo have I blis,
Of o thing God hath ſent me large grace:
For whan I ſee the beautee of your face,
Ye ben ſo ſcarlet red about your eyen,
It maketh all my drede for to dien,
For, al ſo ſiker as *In principio,*
Mulier eſt hominis confuſio.
(Madame, the ſentence of this Latine is,
Woman is mannes joye and mannes blis.)
For whan I fele a-night your ſofte ſide,
Al be it that I may not on you ride,
For that our perche is made ſo narwe, alas!
I am ſo ful of joye and of ſolas,
That I deffie bothe ſweven and dreme.
And with that word he flew doun fro the beme,
For it was day, and eke his hennes alle;
And with a chuk he gan hem for to calle,
For he had found a corn, lay in the yerd.
Real he was, he was no more aferd:
He fethered Pertelote twenty time,
And trade hire eke as oft, er it was prime.
He loketh as it were a grim leoun;
And on his toos he rometh up and doun,
Him deigned not to ſet his feet to ground;
He chukketh, whan he hath a corn yfound,

And to him rennen than his wives alle.
Thus real, as a prince is in his halle,
Leve I this Chaunteclere in his paſture;
And after wol I tell his aventure.
Whan that the month in which the world began,
That highte March, whan God firſt maked man,
Was complete, and ypaſſed were alſo,
Sithen March ended, thritty dayes and two,
Befell that Chaunteclere in all his pride,
His ſeven wives walking him beſide,
Caſt up his eyen to the brighte ſonne,
That in the ſigne of Taurus hadde yronne
Twenty degrees and on, and ſomwhat more:
He knew by kind, and by non other lore,
That it was prime, and crew with blisful ſtevene.
The ſonne, he ſaid, is clomben up on heven
Twenty degrees and on, and more ywis.
Madame Pertelote, my worldes blis,
Herkeneth thiſe blisful briddes how they ſing,
And ſee the freſhe floures how they ſpring;
Ful is min herte of revel, and ſolas.
But ſodenly him fell a ſorweful cas;
For ever the latter ende of joye is wo:
God wote that worldly joye is ſone ago:
And if a rethor coude faire endite,
He in a chronicle might it ſaufly write,

As for a ſoveraine notabilitee.
Now every wiſe man let him herken me:
This ſtory is al ſo trewe, I undertake,
As is the book of Launcelot du lake,
That women holde in ful gret reverence.
Now wol I turne agen to my ſentence.
A col fox, ful of ſleigh iniquitee,
That in the grove had wonned yeres three,
By high imagination forecaſt,
The ſame night thurghout the hegges braſt
Into the yerd, ther Chaunteclere the faire
Was wont, and eke his wives, to repaire:
And in a bedde of wortes ſtille he lay,
Till it was paſſed undern of the day,
Waiting his time on Chaunteclere to falle:
As gladly don thiſe homicides alle,
That in await liggen to mordre men.
O falſe morderour, rucking in thy den!
O newe Scariot, newe Genelon!
O falſe diſſimulour, o Greek Sinon,
That broughteſt Troye al utterly to ſorwe!
O Chaunteclere, accurſed be the morwe,
That thou into thy yerd flew fro the bemes:
Thou were ful wel ywarned by thy dremes,
That thilke day was perilous to thee.
But what that God forewote moſt nedes be,

After the opinion of certain clerkes.
Witneſſe on him, that any parfit clerk is,
That in ſcole is gret altercation
In this matere, and gret diſputiſon,
And hath ben of an hundred thouſand men.
But I ne cannot boult it to the bren,
As can the holy doctour Auguſtin,
Or Boece, or the biſhop Bradwardin,
Whether that Goddes worthy foreweting
Streineth me nedely for to don a thing,
(Nedely clepe I ſimple neceſſitee)
Or elles if free chois be granted me
To do that ſame thing, or do it nought,
Though God forewot it, or that it was wrought;
Or if his weting ſtreineth never a del,
But by neceſſitee condicionel.
I wol not han to don of ſwiche matere;
My tale is of a cok, as ye may here,
That took his conſeil of his wif with ſorwe
To walken in the yerd upon the morwe,
That he had met the dreme, as I you told.
Womennes conſeiles ben ful often cold;
Womannes conſeil brought us firſt to wo,
And made Adam fro paradis to go,
Ther as he was ful mery, and wel at eſe.
But for I n'ot, to whom I might diſpleſe,

If

If I conſeil of women wolde blame,
Paſſe over, for I ſaid it in my game.
Rede auctours, wher they trete of ſwiche matere,
And what they ſayn of women ye mown here.
Thiſe ben the Cokkes wordes, and not mine;
I can non harme of no woman devine.
Faire in the ſond, to bath hire merily,
Lith Pertelote, and all hire ſuſters by,
Agein the ſonne, and Chaunteclere ſo free
Sang merier than the Mermaid in the ſee,
For Phiſiologus ſayth ſikerly,
How that they ſingen wel and merily.
And ſo befell that as he caſt his eye
Among the wortes on a boterflie,
He was ware of this fox that lay ful low.
Nothing ne liſt him thanne for to crow,
But cried anon cok, cok, and up he ſterte,
As man that was affraied in his herte.
For naturelly a beeſt deſireth flee
Fro his contrarie, if he may it ſee,
Though he never erſt had ſeen it with his eye.
This Chaunteclere, whan he gan him eſpie,
He wold han fled, but that the fox anon
Said; gentil ſire, alas! what wol ye don?
Be ye affraid of me that am your frend?
Now certes, I were werſe than any fend,

If

If I to you wold harme or vilanie.
I n'am not come your conſeil to eſpie.
But trewely the cauſe of my coming
Was only for to herken how ye ſing:
For trewely ye han as mery a ſteven,
As any angel hath, that is in heven;
Therwith ye han of muſike more feling,
Than had Boece, or any that can ſing.
My lord your fader (God his ſoule bleſſe)
And eke your moder of hire gentilleſſe
Han in myn hous yben, to my gret eſe:
And certes, ſire, ful fain wold I you pleſe.
But for men ſpeke of ſinging, I wol ſey,
So mote I brouken wel min eyen twey,
Save you, ne herd I never man ſo ſing,
As did your fader in the morwening.
Certes it was of herte all that he ſong.
And for to make his vois the more ſtrong,
He wold ſo peine him, that with both his eyen
He muſte winke, ſo loud he wolde crien,
And ſtonden on his tiptoon therwithal,
And ſtretchen forth his necke long and ſmal.
And eke he was of ſwiche diſcretion,
That ther n'as no man in no region,
That him in ſong or wiſdom mighte paſſe.
I have wel red in dan Burnel the aſſe

Among

Among his vers, how that ther was a cok,
That for a preeſtes ſone yave him a knok
Upon his leg, while he was yonge and nice,
He made him for to leſe his benefice.
But certain ther is no compariſon
Betwix the wiſdom and diſcretion
Of youre fader, and his ſubtilitee.
Now ſingeth, ſire, for Seinte Charitee,
Let ſee, can ye your fader contrefete?
This Chaunteclere his winges gan to bete,
As man that coud not his treſon eſpie,
So was he raviſhed with his flaterie.
Alas! ye lordes, many a falſe flatour
Is in your court, and many a loſengeour,
That pleſeth you wel more, by my faith,
Than he that ſothfaſtneſſe unto you ſaith.
Redeth Eccleſiaſt of flaterie,
Beth ware, ye lordes, of hire trecherie.
This Chaunteclere ſtood high upon his toos
Stretching his necke, and held his eyen cloos,
And gan to crowen loude for the nones:
And dan Ruſſel the fox ſtert up at ones,
And by the gargat hente Chaunteclere,
And on his back toward the wood him bere.
For yet ne was ther no man that him ſued.
O deſtinee, that maiſt not ben eſchued!

Alas,

Alas, that Chaunteclere flew fro the bemes!
Alas, his wif ne raughte not of dremes!
And on a Friday fell all this meſchance.
O Venus, that art goddeſſe of pleſance,
Sin that thy ſervant was this Chaunteclere,
And in thy ſervice did all his powere,
More for delit, than world to multiplie,
Why wolt thou ſuffre him on thy day to die?
O Gaufride, dere maiſter ſoverain,
That, whan thy worthy king Richard was ſlain
With ſhot, complainedeſt his deth ſo ſore,
Why ne had I now thy ſcience and thy lore,
The Friday for to chiden, as did ye?
(For on a Friday ſothly ſlain was he)
Than wold I ſhew you how that I coud plaine,
For Chaunteclere's drede, and for his paine.
Certes ſwiche cry, ne lamentation
N'as never of ladies made, whan Ilion
Was wonne, and Pirrus with his ſtreite ſwerd
Whan he had hent king Priam by the berd,
And ſlain him, (as ſaith us *Eneidos*)
As maden all the hennes in the cloos,
Whan they had ſeen of Chaunteclere the ſight.
But ſoverainly dame Pertelote ſhright,
Ful louder than did Haſdruballes wif,
Whan that hire huſbond hadde yloſt his lif,

And that the Romaines hadden brent Cartage,
She was ſo ful of turment and of rage,
That wilfully into the fire ſhe ſterte,
And brent hire ſelven, with a ſtedfaſt herte.
O woful hennes, right ſo criden ye,
As, whan that Nero brente the citee
Of Rome, cried the ſenatoures wives,
For that hir huſbonds loſten alle hir lives;
Withouten gilt this Nero hath hem ſlain.
Now wol I turne unto my tale again.
The ſely widewe, and hire doughtren two,
Herden thiſe hennes crie and maken wo,
And out at the dores ſterten they anon,
And ſaw the fox toward the wode is gon,
And bare upon his back the cok away:
They crieden, out! harow and wala wa!
A ha the fox! and after him they ran,
And eke with ſtaves, many another man;
Ran Colle our dogge, and Talbot, and Gerlond,
And Malkin, with hire diſtaf in hire hond;
Ran cow and calf, and eke the veray hogges
So fered were for berking of the dogges,
And ſhouting of the men and women eke,
They ronnen ſo, hem thought hir hertes breke.
They yelleden as fendes don in helle:
The dokes crieden as men wold hem quelle:

The gees for fere flewen over the trees,
Out of the hive came the ſwarme of bees;
So hidous was the noiſe, a *benedicite!*
Certes he Jakke Staw, and his meinie,
Ne maden never ſhoutes half ſo ſhrille,
Whan that they wolden any Fleming kille,
As thilke day was made upon the fox.
Of bras they broughten beemes and of box,
Of horn and bone, in which they blew and pouped,
And therwithal they ſhriked and they houped;
It ſemed, as that the heven ſhulde falle.

Now, goode men, I pray you herkeneth alle;
Lo, how fortune turneth ſodenly
The hope and pride eke of hire enemy.
This cok that lay upon the foxes bake,
In all his drede, unto the fox he ſpake,
And ſayde; ſire, if that I were as ye,
Yet wolde I ſayn, (as wiſly God helpe me)
Turneth agein, ye proude cherles alle;
A veray peſtilence upon you falle.
Now am I come unto the wodes ſide,
Maugre your hed, the cok ſhal here abide;
I wol him ete in faith, and that anon.

The fox anſwered, in faith it ſhal be don:
And as he ſpake the word, al ſodenly
The cok brake from his mouth deliverly,

And

And high upon a tree he flew anon.
And whan the fox ſaw that the cok was gon,
Alas! quod he, o Chaunteclere, alas!
I have (quod he) ydon to you treſpas,
In as moche as I maked you aferd,
Whan I you hente, and brought out of youryerd;
But, ſire, I did it in no wikke entente:
Come doun, and I ſhal tell you what I mente.
I ſhal ſay ſothe to you, God helpe me ſo.
Nay than, quod he, I ſhrewe us bothe two.
And firſt I ſhrewe myſelf, bothe blood and bones,
If thou begile me oftener than ones.
Thou ſhalt no more thurgh thy flaterie
Do me to ſing and winken with myn eye.
For he that winketh, whan he ſhulde ſee,
Al wilfully, God let him never the.
Nay, quod the fox, but God yeve him meſchance,
That is ſo indiſcrete of governance,
That jangleth, whan that he ſhuld hold his pees.
Lo, which it is for to be reccheles
And negligent, and truſt on flaterie.
But ye that holden this tale a folie,
As of a fox, or of a cok, or hen,
Taketh the moralitee therof, good men.
For Seint Poule ſayth, That all that writen is,
To our doctrine it is ywriten ywis.

Taketh

Taketh the fruit, and let the chaf be ſtille.
Now, goode God, if that it be thy wille,
As ſayth my Lord, ſo make us all good men;
And bring us to thy highe bliſſe. *Amen.*

Sire Nonnes Preeſt, our hoſte ſayd anon,
Ybleſſed be thy breche and every ſton;
This was a mery tale of Chaunteclere.
But by my trouthe, if thou were ſeculere,
Thou woldeſt ben a tredefoule a right:
For if thou have corage as thou haſt might,
Thee were nede of hennes, as I wene,
Ye mo than ſeven times ſeventene.
Se, whiche braunes hath this gentil preeſt,
So gret a necke, and ſwiche a large breeſt!
He loketh as a ſparhauk with his eyen;
Him nedeth not his colour for to dien
With Braſil, ne with grain of Portingale.
But, ſire, faire falle you for your tale.
And after that, he with ful mery chere
Sayd to another, as ye ſhulen here.

* * * * * *

THE SECOND NONNES TALE.

The miniſtre and the norice unto vices,
Which that men clepe in Engliſh idelneſſe,
That porter at the gate is of delices,
To eſchuen, and by hire contrary hire oppreſſe,

That

That is to ſain, by leful beſineſſe,
Wel oughte we to don al our entente,
Leſt that the fend thurgh idelneſſe us hente.

For he that with his thouſand cordes ſlie
Continuelly us waiteth to beclappe,
Whan he may man in idelneſſe eſpie,
He can ſo lightly cacche him in his trappe,
Til that a man be hent right by the lappe,
He n'is not ware the fend hath him in hond:
Wel ought us werche, and idelneſſe withſtond.

And though men dradden never for to die,
Yet ſee men wel by reſon douteles,
That idelneſſe is rote of ſlogardie,
Of which ther never cometh no good encrees,
And ſee that ſlouthe holdeth hem in a lees,
Only to ſlepe, and for to ete and drinke,
And to devouren all that other ſwinke.

And for to put us from ſwiche idelneſſe,
That cauſe is of ſo gret confuſion,
I have here don my feithful beſineſſe
After the Legende in tranſlation
Right of thy glorious lif and paſſion,
Thou with thy gerlond, wrought of roſe and lilie,
Thee mene I, maid and martir Seinte Cecilie.

And thou, that arte floure of virgines all,
Of whom that Bernard liſt ſo wel to write,
To thee at my beginning firſt I call,
Thou comfort of us wretches, do me endite
Thy maidens deth, that wan thurgh hire merite
The eternal lif, and over the fend victorie,
As man may after reden in hire ſtorie.

Thou maide and mother, doughter of thy ſon,
Thou well of mercy, ſinful ſoules cure,
In whom that God of bountee chees to won;
Thou humble and high over every creature,
Thou nobledeſt ſo fer forth our nature,
That no deſdaine the maker had of kinde
His ſon in blood and fleſh to clothe and winde.

Within the cloyſtre blisful of thy ſides,
Toke mannes ſhape the eternal love and pees,
That of the trine compas Lord and gide is,
Whom erthe, and ſee, and heven out of relees
Ay herien; and thou, virgine wemmeles,
Bare of thy body (and dwelteſt maiden pure)
The creatour of every creature.

Aſſembled is in thee magnificence
With mercy, goodneſſe, and with ſwiche pitee,
That thou, that art the ſonne of excellence,

Not only helpeſt hem that praien thee,
But oftentime of thy benignitee
Ful freely, or that men thin helpe beſeche,
Thou goeſt beforne, and art hir lives leche.

Now helpe, thou meke and blisful faire maide,
Me flemed wretch, in this deſert of galle;
Thinke on the woman Cananee, that ſaide
That whelpes eten ſom of the cromes alle
That from hir Lordes table ben yfalle;
And though that I, unworthy ſone of Eve,
Be ſinful, yet accepteth my beleve.

And for that feith is ded withouten werkes,
So for to werken yeve me wit and ſpace,
That I be quit from thennes that moſt derke is;
O thou, that art ſo faire and ful of grace,
Be thou min advocat in that high place,
Ther as withouten ende is ſonge Oſanne,
Thou Criſtes mother, doughter dere of Anne.

And of thy light my ſoule in priſon light,
That troubled is by the contagion
Of my body, and alſo by the wight
Of erthly luſt, and falſe affection:
O haven of refute, o ſalvation
Of hem that ben in ſorwe and in diſtreſſe,
Now help, for to my werk I wol me dreſſe.

Yet pray I you that reden that I write,
Forȳeve me, that I do no diligence
This ilke ſtorie ſubtilly to endite.
For both have I the wordes and ſentence
Of him, that at the ſeintes reverence
The ſtorie wrote, and folowed hire legende,
And pray you that ye wol my werk amende.

Firſt wol I you the name of Seinte Cecilie
Expoune, as men may in hire ſtorie ſee:
It is to ſayn in Engliſh, Hevens lilie,
For pure chaſtneſſe of virginitee,
Or for ſhe whitneſſe had of honeſtee,
And grene of conſcience, and of good fame
The ſwote ſavour, Lilie was hire name.

Or Cecilie is to ſayn, the way to blinde,
For ſhe enſample was by good teching;
Or elles Cecilie, as I writen finde,
Is joined by a maner conjoining
Of heven and *Lia*, and here in figuring
The heven is ſet for thought of holineſſe,
And *Lia*, for hire laſting beſineſſe.

Cecilie may eke be ſayd in this manere,
Wanting of blindneſſe, for hire grete light
Of ſapience, and for hire thewes clere.

Or

Or elles lo, this maidens name bright
Of heven and *Leos* cometh, for which by right
Men might hire wel the heven of peple calle,
Enſample of good and wiſe werkes alle:

For *Leos* peple in Engliſh is to ſay;
And right as men may in the heven ſee
The ſonne and mone, and ſterres every way,
Right ſo men goſtly, in this maiden free
Sawen of faith the magnanimitee,
And eke the clereneſſe hole of ſapience,
And ſondry werkes, bright of excellence.

And right ſo as thiſe Philoſophres write,
That heven is ſwift and round, and eke brenning,
Right ſo was faire Cecilie the white
Ful ſwift and beſy in every good werking,
And round and hole in good perſevering,
And brenning ever in charitee ful bright:
Now have I you declared what ſhe hight.

This maiden bright Cecile, as hire lif ſaith,
Was come of Romaines and of noble kind,
And from hire cradle foſtred in the faith
Of Criſt, and bare his Goſpel in hire mind:
She never ceſed, as I writen find,

Of hire prayere, and God to love and drede,
Beſeching him to kepe hire maidenhede.

And whan this maiden ſhuld until a man
Ywedded be, that was ful yonge of age,
Which that ycleped was Valerian,
And day was comen of hire marriage,
She ful devout and humble in hire corage,
Under hire robe of gold, that ſat ful faire,
Had next hire fleſh yclad hire in an haire.

And while that the organs maden melodie,
To God alone thus in hire hert ſong ſhe;
O Lord, my ſoule and eke my body gie
Unwemmed, leſt that I confounded be.
And for his love that died upon the tree,
Every ſecond or thridde day ſhe faſt,
Ay bidding in hire oriſons ful faſt.

The night came, and to bedde muſt ſhe gon
With hire huſbond, as it is the manere,
And prively ſhe ſaid to him anon;
O ſwete and wel beloved ſpouſe dere,
Ther is a conſeil, and ye wol it here,
Which that right fayn I wold unto you ſaie,
So that ye ſwere, ye wol it not bewraie.

Valerian

Valerian gan faſt unto hire ſwere,
That for no cas, ne thing that mighte be,
He ſhulde never to non bewraien here;
And than at erſt thus to him ſaide ſhe;
I have an Angel which that loveth me,
That with gret love, wher ſo I wake or ſlepe,
Is redy ay my body for to kepe;

And if that he may felen out of drede,
That ye me touch or love in vilanie,
He right anon wol ſleen you with the dede,
And in your youthe thus ye ſhulden die.
And if that ye in clene love me gie,
He wol you love as me, for your cleneneſſe,
And ſhew to you his joye and his brightneſſe.

This Valerian, corrected as God wold,
Anſwerd again, if I ſhal truſten thee,
Let me that angel ſeen, and him behold;
And if that it a veray angel be,
Than wol I don as thou haſt prayed me;
And if thou love another man, forſothe
Right with this ſwerd than wol I ſlee you bothe.

Cecile anſwerd anon right in this wiſe;
If that you liſt, the angel ſhul ye ſee,
So that ye trowe on Criſt, and you baptiſe;

Goth forth to Via Apia (quod ſhe)
That fro this toun ne ſtant but miles three,
And to the poure folkes that ther dwellen
Say hem right thus, as that I ſhal you tellen.

Tell hem, that I Cecile you to hem ſent
To ſhewen you the good Urban the old,
For ſecree nedes, and for good entent;
And whan that ye Seint Urban han behold,
Tell him the wordes whiche I to you told;
And whan that he hath purged you fro ſinne,
Than ſhal ye ſeen that angel er ye twinne.

Valerian is to the place gon,
And right as he was taught by hire lerning,
He fond this holy old Urban anon
Among the ſeintes buriels louting:
And he anon withouten tarying
Did his meſſage, and whan that he it tolde,
Urban for joye his hondes gan upholde.

The teres from his eyen let he falle;
Almighty Lord, o Jeſu Criſt, quod he,
Sower of chaſt conſeil, hierde of us alle,
The fruit of thilke ſeed of chaſtitee
That thou haſt ſow in Cecile, take to thee:
Lo, like a beſy bee withouten gile
Thee ſerveth ay thin owen thral Cecile.

For

For thilke ſpouſe, that ſhe toke but newe
Ful like a fiers leon, ſhe ſendeth here
As meke as ever was any lambe to ewe.
And with that word anon ther gan apere
An old man, clad in white clothes clere,
That had a book with lettres of gold in hond,
And gan beforne Valerian to ſtond.

Valerian, as ded, fell doun for drede,
Whan he him ſaw; and he up hent him tho,
And on his book right thus he gan to rede;
On Lord, on faith, on God withouten mo,
On Criſtendom, and fader of all alſo
Aboven all, and over all every wher:
Thiſe wordes all with gold ywriten were.

Whan this was red, than ſaid this olde man,
Leveſt thou this thing or no? ſay ye or nay.
I leve all this thing, quod Valerian,
For ſother thing than this, I dare wel ſay,
Under the heven no wight thinken may.
Tho vaniſhed the olde man, he n'iſte wher,
And pope Urban him criſtened right ther.

Valerian goth home, aud fint Cecilie
Within his chambre with an angel ſtonde:
This angel had of roſes and of lilie

Corones

Corones two, the which he bare in honde,
And firſt to Cecile, as I underſtonde,
He yaf that on, and after gan he take
That other to Valerian hire make.

With body clene, and with unwemmed thought
Kepeth ay wel thiſe corones two, quod he,
From paradis to you I have hem brought,
Ne never mo ne ſhul they roten be,
Ne leſe hir ſwete ſavour, truſteth me,
Ne never wight ſhal ſeen hem with his eye,
But he be chaſte, and hate vilanie.

And thou, Valerian, for thou ſo ſone
Aſſentedeſt to good conſeil, alſo
Say what thee liſt, and thou ſhalt han thy bone.
I have a brother, quod Valerian tho,
That in this world I love no man ſo,
I pray you that my brother may have grace
To know the trouth, as I do in this place.

The angel ſayd; God liketh thy requeſt,
And bothe with the palme of martirdome
Ye ſhullen come unto his blisful reſt.
And with that word, Tiburce his brother come.
And whan that he the ſavour undernome,
Which that the roſes and the lilies caſt,
Within his herte he gan to wonder faſt,

And

And ſaid; I wonder this time of the yere
Whennes that ſwete ſavour cometh ſo
Of roſes and lilies, that I ſmelle here;
For though I had hem in min hondes two,
The ſavour might in me no deper go:
The ſwete ſmel, that in min herte I find,
Hath changed me all in another kind.

Valerian ſaide; two corones han we
Snow-white and roſe-red, that ſhinen clere,
Which that thin eyen han no might to ſee:
And as thou ſmelleſt hem thurgh my praiere,
So ſhalt thou ſeen hem, leve brother dere,
If it ſo be thou wolt withouten ſlouthe
Beleve aright, and know the veray trouthe.

Tiburce anſwered; ſaieſt thou this to me
In ſothneſſe, or in dreme herken I this?
In dremes, quod Valerian, han we be
Unto this time, brother min, ywis:
But now at erſt in trouthe our dwelling is.
How woſt thou this, quod Tiburce, in what wiſe?
Quod Valerian; that ſhal I thee deviſe.

The angel of God hath me the trouth ytaught,
Which thou ſhalt ſeen, if that thou wilt reney
The idoles, and be clene, and elles naught.

And

[And of the miracle of thiſe corones twey
Seint Ambroſe in his preface liſt to ſey;
Solempnely this noble doctour dere
Commendeth it, and ſaith in this manere.

The palme of martirdome for to receive,
Seinte Cecilie, fulfilled of Goddes yeft,
The world and eke hire chambre gan ſhe weive;
Witneſſe Tiburces and Ceciles ſhrift,
To which God of his bountee wolde ſhift
Corones two, of floures wel ſmelling,
And made his angel hem the corones bring.

The maid hath brought thiſe men to bliſſe above;
The world hath wiſt what it is worth certain
Devotion of chaſtitee to love.]
Tho ſhewed him Cecile all open and plain,
That all idoles n'is but a thing in vain,
For they ben dombe, and therto they ben deve,
And charged him his idoles for to leve,

Who ſo that troweth not this, a beſt he is,
Quod this Tiburce, if that I ſhal not lie,
And ſhe gan kiſſe his breſt whan ſhe herd this,
And was ful glad he coude trouth eſpie:
This day I take thee for min allie,
Saide this blisful faire maiden dere;
And after that ſhe ſaid as ye may here.

Lo,

Lo, right ſo as the love of Criſt (quod ſhe)
Made me thy brothers wif, right in that wiſe
Anon for mine allie here take I thee,
Sithen that thou wolt thin idoles deſpiſe.
Goth with thy brother now and thee baptiſe,
And make thee clene, ſo that thou maiſt behold
The angels face, of which thy brother told.

Tiburce anſwered, and ſaide; brother dere,
Firſt tell me whither I ſhal, and to what man.
To whom quod he; come forth with goode chere,
I wol thee lede unto the pope Urban.
To Urban? brother min Valerian,
Quod tho Tiburce, wilt thou me thider lede?
Me thinketh that it were a wonder dede.

Ne meneſt thou not Urban (quod he tho)
That is ſo often damned to be ded,
And woneth in halkes alway to and fro,
And dare not ones putten forth his hed?
Men ſhuld him brennen in a fire ſo red,
If he were found, or that men might him ſpie,
And we alſo, to bare him compagnie.

And while we ſeken thilke divinitee,
That is yhid in heven prively,
Algate ybrent in this world ſhuld we be.

To

To whom Cecile anſwered boldely;
Men mighten dreden wel and ſkilfully
This lif to leſe, min owen dere brother,
If this were living only and non other.

But ther is better lif in other place,
That never ſhal be loſt, ne drede thee nought:
Which Goddes ſone us tolde thurgh his grace,
That fadres ſone which alle thinges wrought;
And all that wrought is with a ſkilful thought,
The goſt, that from the fader gan procede,
Hath ſouled hem withouten any drede.

By word and by miracle he Goddes ſone,
Whan he was in this world, declared here,
That ther is other lif ther men may wone.
To whom anſwerd Tiburce; o ſuſter dere,
Ne ſaideſt thou right now in this manere,
Ther n'as but o God, lord in ſothfaſtneſſe,
And now of three how mayſt thou bere witneſſe?

That ſhal I tell, quod ſhe, or that I go.
Right as a man hath ſapiences three,
Memorie, engine, and intellect alſo,
So in o being of divinitee
Three perſones mowen ther righte wel be.

Tho

Tho gan ſhe him ful beſily to preche
Of Criſtes ſonde, and of his peines teche,

And many pointes of his paſſion;
How Goddes ſone in this world was withhold
To don mankinde pleine remiſſion,
That was ybound in ſinne and cares cold.
All this thing ſhe unto Tiburce told,
And after this Tiburce in good entent,
With Valerian to pope Urban he went,

That thanked God, and with glad herte and light
He criſtened him, and made him in that place
Parfite in his lerning and Goddes knight.
And after this Tiburce gat ſwiche grace,
That every day he ſaw in time and ſpace
The angel of God, and every maner bone
That he God axed, it was ſped ful ſone.

It were ful hard by ordre for to ſain
How many wonders Jeſus for hem wrought.
But at the laſt, to tellen ſhort and plain,
The ſergeaunts of the toun of Rome hem ſought,
And hem before Almache the prefect brought,
Which hem appoſed, and knew all hire entent,
And to the image of Jupiter hem ſent.

And ſaid; who ſo wol nought do ſacrifice,
Swap of his hed, this is my ſentence here.
Anon thiſe martyrs, that I you deviſe,
On Maximus, that was an officere
Of the prefectes, and his corniculere,
Hem hent, and whan he forth the ſeintes lad,
Himſelf he wept for pitee that he had.

Whan Maximus had herd the ſeintes lore,
He gate him of the turmentoures leve,
And lad hem to his hous withouten more;
And with hir preching, or that it were eve,
They gonnen fro the turmentours to reve,
And fro Maxime, and fro his folk eche on
The falſe faith, to trowe in God alone.

Cecilie came, whan it was waxen night,
With preeſtes, that hem criſtened all yfere;
And afterward, whan day was waxen light,
Cecilie hem ſaid with a ful ſtedfaſt chere;
Now, Criſtes owen knightes leve and dere,
Caſte all away the werkes of derkeneſſe,
And armeth you in armes of brightneſſe.

Ye han forſoth ydon a gret bataille;
Your cours is don, your faith hath you conſerved;
Goth to the croune of lif that may not faille;

The

The rightful juge, which that ye han ſerved,
Shal yeve it you, as ye han it deſerved.
And whan this thing was ſaid, as I deviſe,
Men ledde hem forth to don the ſacrifice.

But whan they weren to the place ybrought,
To tellen ſhortly the concluſioun,
They n'olde encenſe, ne ſacrifice right nought,
But on hir knees they ſetten hem adoun,
With humble herte and ſad devotioun,
And loſten bothe hir hedes in the place;
Hir ſoules wenten to the king of grace.

This Maximus, that ſaw this thing betide,
With pitous teres told it anon right,
That he hir ſoules ſaw to heven glide
With angels, ful of clereneſſe and of light;
And with his word converted many a wight.
For which Almachius did him to-bete
With whip of led, til he his lif gan lete.

Cecile him toke, and buried him anon
By Tiburce and Valerian ſoftely,
Within hir burying place, under the ſton.
And after this Almachius haſtily
Bad his miniſtres fetchen openly

Cecile, ſo that ſhe might in his preſence
Don ſacrifice, and Jupiter encenſe.

But they converted at hire wiſe lore
Wepten ful ſore, and yaven ful credence
Unto hire word, and crieden more and more;
Criſt, Goddes ſone, withouten difference
Is veray God, this is all our ſentence,
That hath ſo good á ſervant him to ſerve:
Thus with o vois we trowen though we ſterve.

Almachius, that herd of this doing,
Bad fetchen Cecile, that he might hire ſee:
And alderfirſt, lo, this was his axing;
What maner woman arte thou? quod he.
I am a gentilwoman borne, quod ſhe.
I axe thee, quod he, though it thee greve,
Of thy religion and of thy beleve.

Why than began your queſtion folily,
Quod ſhe, that woldeſt two anſwers conclude
In o demand? ye axen lewedly.
Almache anſwerd to that ſimilitude,
Of whennes cometh thin anſwering ſo rude?
Of whennes? (quod ſhe, whan that ſhe was freined)
Of conſcience, and of good faith unfeined.

Almachius

Almachius ſaid; ne takeſt thou non hede
Of my power? and ſhe him anſwerd this;
Your might (quod ſhe) ful litel is to drede;
For every mortal mannes power n'is
But like a bladder ful of wind ywis:
For with a nedles point, whan it is blow,
May all the boſt of it be laid ful low.

Ful wrongfully begonneſt thou, (quod he)
And yet in wrong is al thy perſeverance:
Woſt thou not how our mighty princes free
Have thus commanded and made ordinance,
That every criſten wight ſhal han penance
But if that he his Criſtendome withſeye,
And gon al quite, if he wol it reneye?

Your princes erren, as your nobley doth,
Quod tho Cecile, and with a wood ſentence
Ye make us gilty, and it is not ſoth:
For ye that knowen wel our innocence,
For as moche as we don ay reverence
To Criſt, and for we bere a Criſten name,
Ye put on us a crime and eke a blame.

But we that knowen thilke name ſo
For vertuous, we may it not withſeye.
Almache anſwered; cheſe on of thiſe two,

Do ſacrifice, or Criſtendom reneye,
That thou mow now eſcapen by that wey.
At which this holy blisful fayre maid
Gan for to laughe, and to the juge ſaid:

O juge confuſe in thy nicetee,
Woldest ~~Wolt~~ thou that I reneye~~nnin~~ innocence?
To maken me a wicked wight (quod ſhe)
Lo, he diſſimuleth here in audience,
He ſtareth and wodeth in his advertence.
To whom Almachius ſaid; Unſely wretch,
Ne woſt thou not how far my might may ſtretch?

Han not our mighty princes to me yeven
Ya bothe power and eke auctoritee
To maken folk to dien or to liven?
Why ſpekeſt thou ſo proudly than to me?
I ne ſpeke nought but ſtedfaſtly, quod ſhe,
Not proudely, for I ſay, as for my ſide,
We haten dedly thilke vice of pride.

And if thou drede not a ſoth for to here,
Than wol I ſhewe al openly by right,
That thou haſt made a ful gret leſing here.
Thou ſaiſt, thy princes han thee yeven might
Both for to ſlee and for to quiken a wight,

Thou

Thou that ne maiſt but only lif bereve,
Thou haſt non other power ne no leve.

But thou maiſt ſayn, thy princes han thee maked
Miniſtre of deth; for if thou ſpeke of mo,
Thou lieſt; for thy power is ful naked.
Do way thy boldneſſe, ſaid Almachius tho,
And ſacrifice to our goddes, er thou go.
I recke not what wrong that thou me proffre,
For I can ſuffre it as a philoſophre.

But thilke wronges may I not endure,
That thou ſpekeſt of our goddes here, quod he.
Cecile anſwerd; o nice creature,
Thou ſaideſt no word ſin thou ſpake to me,
That I ne knew therwith thy nicetee,
And that thou were in every maner wiſe
A lewed officer, a vain juſtice.

Ther lacketh nothing to thin utter eyen
That thou n'art blind; for thing that we ſeen alle
That is a ſton, that men may wel eſpien,
That ilke ſton a god thou wolt it calle.
I rede thee let thin hond upon it falle,
And taſt it wel, and ſton thou ſhalt it find,
Sin that thou ſeeſt not with thin eyen blind.

It is a ſhame that the peple ſhal
So ſcornen thee, and laugh at thy folie:
For comunly men wot it wel over al,
That mighty God is in his hevens hie;
And thiſe images, wel maiſt thou eſpie,
To thee ne to hemſelf may not profite,
For in effect they be not worth a mite.

Thiſe and ſwiche other wordes ſaide ſhe,
And he wex wroth, and bade men ſhuld hire lede
Home til hire houſe, and in hire hous (quod he)
Brenne hire right in a bath, with flames rede.
And as he bade, right ſo was don the dede;
For in a bathe they gonne hire faſte ſhetten,
And night and day gret fire they under betten.

The longe night, and eke a day alſo,
For all the fire, and eke the bathes hete,
She ſate al cold, and felt of it no wo,
It made hire not a drope for to ſwete:
But in that bath hire lif ſhe muſte lete.
For he Almache, with a ful wicke entent,
To ſleen hire in the bath his ſonde ſent.

Three ſtrokes in the nekke he ſmote hire tho
The turmentour, but for no maner chance
He mighte not ſmite all hire nekke atwo:

And

And for ther was that time an ordinance
That no man ſhulde don man ſwiche penance,
The fourthe ſtroke to ſmiten, ſoft or ſore,
This turmentour ne dorſte do no more;

But half ded, with hire nekke ycorven ther
He left hire lie, and on his way is went.
The criſten folk, which that about hire were,
With ſhetes han the blood ful faire yhent:
Three dayes lived ſhe in this turment,
And never ceſed hem the faith to teche,
That ſhe had foſtred hem, ſhe gan to preche.

And hem ſhe yaf hire mebles and hire thing,
And to the pope Urban betoke hem tho,
And ſaid; I axed this of heven king,
To have reſpit three dayes and no mo,
To recommend to you, or that I go,
Thiſe ſoules lo, and that I might do werche
Here of min hous perpetuellich a cherche.

Seint Urban, with his dekenes prively
The body fette, and buried it by night
Among his other ſeintes honeſtly:
Hire hous the cherche of ſeinte Cecile hight;
Seint Urban halowed it, as he wel might,

In which unto this day in noble wiſe
Men don to Criſt and to his ſeinte ſerviſe.

THE CHANONES YEMANNES PROLOGUE.

WHAN that tolde was the lif of ſeinte Cecile,
Er we had ridden fully five mile,
At Boughton under blee us gan atake
A man, that clothed was in clothes blake,
And undernethe he wered a white ſurplis.
His hakeney, which that was al pomelee gris,
So ſwatte, that it wonder was to ſee,
It ſemed as he had priked miles three.
The horſe eke that his yeman rode upon,
So ſwatte, that unnethes might he gon.
About the peytrel ſtood the ſome ful hie,
He was of ſome as flecked as a pie.
A male tweifold on his croper lay,
It ſemed that he caried litel array,
Al light for ſommer rode this worthy man.
And in my herte wondren I began
What that he was, til that I underſtode,
How that his cloke was ſowed to his hode;
For which whan I had long aviſed me,
I demed him ſome chanon for to be.
His hat heng at his back doun by a las,
For he had ridden more than trot or pas,

He

He had ay priked like as he were wode.
A clote lefe he had laid under his hode
For ſwete, and for to kepe his hed fro hete.
But it was joye for to ſeen him ſwete;
His forehed dropped, as a ſtillatorie
Were ful of plantaine or of paritorie.
And whan that he was come, he gan to crie,
God ſave (quod he) this joly compagnie.
Faſt have I priked (quod he) for your ſake,
Becauſe that I wolde you atake,
To riden in this mery compagnie.
His yeman was eke ful of curteſie,
And ſaide; Sires, now in the morwe tide
Out of your hoſtelrie I ſaw you ride,
And warned here my lord and ſoverain,
Which that to riden with you is ful fain,
For his diſport; he loveth daliance.
Frend, for thy warning God yeve the good chance,
Than ſaid our hoſte; certain it wolde ſeme
Thy lord were wiſe, and ſo I may wel deme;
He is ful joconde alſo dare I leye:
Can he ought tell a mery tale or tweie,
With which he gladen may this compagnie?
Who, ſire? my lord? Ye, ſire, withouten lie,
He can of mirth and eke of jolitee
Not but ynough; alſo, ſire, truſteth me,

And ye him knew al ſo wel as do I,
Ye wolden wondre how wel and craftily
He coude werke, and that in ſondry wiſe.
He hath take on him many a gret empriſe,
Which were ful harde for any that is here
To bring about, but they of him it lere.
As homely as he rideth amonges you,
If ye him knew, it wold be for your prow:
Ye wolden not forgon his acquaintance
For mochel good, I dare lay in balance
All that I have in my poſſeſſion.
He is a man of high diſcreſſion,
I warne you wel, he is a paſſing man.
Wel, quod our hoſte, I pray thee tell me than,
Is he a clerk, or non? tell what he is.
Nay, he is greter than a clerk ywis,
Saide this yeman, and in wordes fewe,
Hoſte, of his craft ſomwhat I wol you ſhewe.
I ſay, my lord can ſwiche a ſubtiltee,
(But all his craft ye moun not wete of me,
And ſomwhat help I yet to his werking)
That all the ground on which we ben riding
Til that we come to Canterbury toun,
He coud al clene turnen up ſo doun,
And pave it all of ſilver and of gold.
And whan this yeman had this tale ytolde

Unto

Unto our hoſte, he ſaid; *benedicite*,
This thing is wonder mervaillous to me,
Sin that thy lord is of ſo high prudence,
Becauſe of which men ſhulde him reverence,
That of his worſhip rekketh he ſo lite;
His overeſt ſloppe it is not worth a mite
As in effect to him, ſo mote I go;
It is all baudy and to-tore alſo.
Why is thy lord ſo ſluttiſh I thee preye,
And is of power better cloth to beye,
If that his dede acorded with thy ſpeche?
Telle me that, and that I thee beſeche.
  Why? quod this yeman, wherto axe ye me?
God helpe me ſo, for he ſhal never the:
(But I wol not avowen that I ſay,
And therfore kepe it ſecree I you pray)
He is to wiſe in faith, as I beleve.
Thing that is overdon, it wol not preve
Aright, as clerkes ſain, it is a vice;
Wherfore in that I hold him lewed and nice.
For whan a man hath overgret a wit,
Ful oft him happeth to miſuſen it:
So doth my lord, and that me greveth ſore.
God it amende, I can ſay now no more.
  Therof no force, good yeman, quod our hoſt,
Sin of the conning of thy lord thou woſt,

Telle

Telle how he doth, I pray thee hertily,
Sin that he is ſo crafty and ſo ſly.
Wher dwellen ye, if it to tellen be?
In the ſubarbes of a toun, quod he,
Lurking in hernes and in lanes blinde,
Wheras thiſe robbours and thiſe theves by kinde
Holden hir privee fereful reſidence,
As they that dare not ſhewen hir preſence,
So faren we, if I ſhal ſay the ſothe.
Yet, quod our hoſte, let me talken to the;
Why art thou ſo diſcoloured of thy face?
Peter, quod he, God yeve it harde grace,
I am ſo uſed the hote fire to blow,
That it hath changed my colour I trow;
I n'am not wont in no mirrour to prie,
But ſwinke ſore, and lerne to multiplie.
We blundren ever, and poren in the fire,
And for all that we faille of our deſire,
For ever we lacken our concluſion.
To mochel folk we don illuſion,
And borwe gold, be it a pound or two,
Or ten or twelve, or many ſommes mo,
And make hem wenen at the leſte wey,
That of a pound we connen maken twey,
Yet is it falſe; and ay we han good hope
It for to don, and after it we grope:

But

But that ſcience is ſo fer us beforne,
We mowen not, although we had it ſworne,
It overtake, it ſlit away ſo faſt;
It wol us maken beggers at the laſt.
While this yeman was thus in his talking,
This Chanon drow him nere, and herd all thing
Which this yeman ſpake, for ſuſpecion
Of mennes ſpeche ever had this Chanon:
For Caton ſayth, that he that gilty is,
Demeth all thing be ſpoken of him ywis:
That was the cauſe, he gan ſo nigh him drawe
To his yeman, to herken all his ſawe,
And thus he ſaide unto his yeman tho;
Hold thou thy pees, and ſpeke no wordes mo:
For if thou do, thou ſhalt it dere abie.
Thou ſclaundreſt me here in this compagnie,
And eke diſcovereſt that thou ſhuldeſt hide.
Ye, quod our hoſte, tell on, what ſo betide;
Of all his thretening recke not a mite.
In faith, quod he, no more I do but lite.
And whan this Chanon ſaw it wold not be,
But his yeman wold tell his privetee,
He fled away for veray ſorwe and ſhame.
A, quod the yeman, here ſhal riſe a game:
All that I can anon I wol you telle,
Sin he is gon; the foule fend him quelle;

For

For never hereafter wol I with him mete
For peny ne for pound, I you behete.
He that me broughte firſt unto that game,
Er that he die, ſorwe have he and ſhame.
For it it is erneſt to me by faith;
That fele I wel, what that any man ſaith;
And yet for all my ſmert, and all my grief,
For all my ſorwe, labour, and meſchief,
I coude never leve it in no wiſe.
Now wolde God my wit mighte ſuffice
To tellen all that longeth to that art;
But natheles, yet wol I tellen part;
Sin that my lord is gon, I wol not ſpare,
Swiche thing as that I know, I wol declare.

THE CHANONES YEMANNES TALE.

With this Chanon I dwelt have ſeven yere,
And of his ſcience am I never the nere:
All that I had, I have yloſt therby,
And God wot, ſo han many mo than I.
Ther I was wont to be right freſh and gay
Of clothing, and of other good array,
Now may I were an hoſe upon min hed;
And wher my colour was both freſh and red,
Now is it wan, and of a leden hewe;
(Who ſo it uſeth, ſo ſhal he it rewe)

And of my ſwinke yet blered is min eye;
Lo which avantage is to multiplie!
That ſliding ſcience hath me made ſo bare,
That I have no good, wher that ever I fare;
And yet I am endetted ſo therby
Of gold, that I have borwed trewely,
That while I live, I ſhal it quiten never;
Let every man be ware by me for ever.
What maner man that caſteth him therto,
If he continue, I hold his thrift ydo;
So help me God, therby ſhal he nat winne,
But empte his purſe, and make his wittes thinne.
And whan he, thurgh his madneſſe and folie,
Hath loſt his owen good thurgh jupartie,
Than he exciteth other folk therto,
To leſe hir good as he himſelf hath do.
For unto ſhrewes joye it is and eſe
To have hir felawes in peine and diſeſe.
Thus was I ones lerned of a clerk;
Of that no charge; I wol ſpeke of our werk.
Whan we be ther as we ſhuln exerciſe
Our elviſh craft, we ſemen wonder wiſe,
Our termes ben ſo clergial and queinte.
I blow the fire til that myn herte feinte.
What ſhuld I tellen eche proportion
Of thinges, whiche that we werchen upon,

As

As on five or ſix unces, may wel be,
Of ſilver, or ſom other quantitee?
And beſie me to tellen you the names,
As orpiment, brent bones, yren ſquames,
That into poudre grounden ben ful ſmal?
And in an erthen pot how put is al,
And ſalt yput in, and alſo pepere,
Beforn thiſe poudres that I ſpeke of here,
And wel ycovered with a lampe of glas?
And of moche other thing which that ther was?
And of the pottes and glaſſes engluting,
That of the aire might paſſen out no thing?
And of the eſy fire, and ſmert alſo,
Which that was made? and of the care and wo,
That we had in our materes ſubliming,
And in amalgaming, and calcening
Of quikſilver, ycleped mercurie crude?
For all our ſleightes we can not conclude.
Our orpiment, and ſublimed mercurie,
Our grounden litarge eke on the porphurie,
Of eche of thiſe of unces a certain
Not helpeth us, our labour is in vain.
Ne, neyther our ſpirites aſcentioun,
Ne our materes that lien al fix adoun,
Mown in our werking nothing us availle;
For loſt is all our labour and travaille,

And

And all the coſt a twenty devil way
Is loſt alſo, which we upon it lay.
Ther is alſo ful many another thing,
That is unto our craft apperteining,
Though I by ordre hem nat reherſen can,
Becauſe that I am a lewed man,
Yet wol I telle hem, as they come to minde,
Though I ne cannot ſet hem in hir kinde,
As bole armoniak, verdegreſe, boras;
And ſondry veſſels made of erthe and glas,
Our urinales, and our deſcenſories,
Viols, croſſettes, and ſublimatories,
Cucurbites, and alembikes eke,
And other ſwiche ger, dere ynough a leke,
What nedeth it for to reherſe hem alle?
Watères rubifying, and bolles galle,
Arſenik, ſal armoniak, and brimſton?
And herbes coude I tell eke many on,
As egremoine, valerian, and lunarie,
And other ſwiche, if that me liſt to tarie;
Our lampes brenning bothe night and day,
To bring about our craft if that we may;
Our fourneis eke of calcination,
And of wateres albification,
Unſlekked lime, chalk, and gleire of an ey,
Poudres divers, aſhes, dong, piſſe, and cley,

Sered pokettes, ſal peter, and vitriole;
And divers fires made of wode and cole;
Sal tartre, alcaly, and ſalt preparat,
And combuſt materes, and coagulat;
Cley made with hors and mannes here, and oile
Of tartre, alum, glas, berme, wort, and argoile,
Roſalgar, and other materes enbibing;
And eke of our materes encorporing,
And of our ſilver citrination,
Our cementing, and fermentation,
Our ingottes, teſtes, and many thinges mo.
I wol you tell as was me taught alſo
The foure ſpirites, and the bodies ſevene
By ordre, as oft I herd my lord hem nevene.
The firſte ſpirit quikſilver cleped is;
The ſecond orpiment; the thridde ywis
Sal armoniak, and the fourth brimſton.
The bodies ſevene eke, lo hem here anon.
Sol gold is, and Luna ſilver we threpe;
Mars iren, Mercurie quikſilver we clepe:
Saturnus led, and Jupiter is tin,
And Venus coper, by my fader kin.
This curſed craft who ſo wol exerciſe,
He ſhal no good have, that him may ſuffice,
For all the good he ſpendeth theraboute
He leſen ſhal, therof have I no doute.

Who

Who ſo that liſteth uttren his folie,
Let him come forth and lernen multiplie:
And every man that hath ought in his cofre,
Let him appere, and wex a philoſophre,
Aſcaunce that craft is ſo light to lere.
Nay, nay, God wot, al be he monk or frere,
Preeſt or chanon, or any other wight,
Though he ſit at his book both day and night
In lerning of this elviſh nice lore,
All is in vain, and parde mochel more
To lerne a lewed man this ſubtiltee;
Fie, ſpeke not therof, for it wol not be.
And conne he letterure, or conne he non,
As in effect, he ſhal finde it all on;
For bothe two by my ſalvation
Concluden in multiplication
Ylike wel, whan they have all ydo;
This is to ſain, they faillen bothe two.
Yet forgate I to maken reherſaile
Of waters coroſif, and of limaile,
And of bodies mollification,
And alſo of hir induration,
Oiles, ablufions, metal fuſible,
To tellen all, wold paſſen any bible,
That o wher is; wherfore as for the beſt
Of all thiſe names now wol I me reſt;

For as I trow, I have you told ynow
To reiſe a fend, al loke he never ſo row.
A, nay, let be; the philoſophres ſton,
Elixer cleped, we ſeken faſt eche on,
For had we him, than were we ſiker ynow;
But unto God of heven I make avow,
For all our craft, whan we han all ydo,
And all our ſleight, he wol not come us to.
He hath ymade us ſpenden mochel good,
For ſorwe of which almoſt we waxen wood,
But that good hope crepeth in our herte,
Suppoſing ever, though we ſore ſmerte,
To ben releved of him afterward.
Swiche ſuppoſing and hope is ſharpe and hard.
I warne you wel it is to ſeken ever.
That future *temps* hath made men diſſever,
In truſt therof, from all that ever they had,
Yet of that art they conne not waxen ſad,
For unto hem it is a bitter ſwete;
So ſemeth it; for ne had they but a ſhete
Which that they might wrappen hem in a-night,
And a bratt to walken in by day-light,
They wold hem ſell, and ſpend it on this craft;
They conne not ſtinten, til no thing be laft.
And evermore, wher ever that they gon,
Men may hem kennen by ſmell of brimſton;

For

For all the world they ſtinken as a gote;
Hir ſavour is ſo rammiſh and ſo hote,
That though a man a mile from hem be,
The ſavour wol enfect him, truſteth me.
Lo, thus by ſmelling and thred-bare array,
If that men liſt, this folk they knowen may.
And if a man wol axe hem prively,
Why they be clothed ſo unthriftily,
They right anon wol rounen in his ere,
And ſaien, if that they eſpied were,
Men wolde hem ſle, becauſe of hir ſcience:
Lo, thus thiſe folk betraien innocence.
Paſſe over this, I go my tale unto.
Er that the pot be on the fire ydo
Of metals with a certain quantitee,
My lord hem tempereth, and no man but he;
(Now he is gon, I dare ſay boldely)
For as men ſain, he can don craftily;
Algate I wote wel he hath ſwiche a name,
And yet ful oft he renneth in a blame,
And wete ye how? ful oft it falleth ſo,
The pot to-breketh, and farewel all is go.
Thiſe metales ben of ſo gret violence,
Our walles may not make hem reſiſtence,
But if they weren wrought of lime and ſton;
They percen ſo, that thurgh the wall they gon;

And ſom of hem ſinke doun into the ground,
(Thus have we loſt by times many a pound)
And ſom are ſcatered all the flore aboute;
Som lepen into the roof withouten doute.
Though that the fend not in our ſight him ſhewe,
I trow that he be with us, thilke ſhrewe,
In helle, wher that he is lord and ſire,
Ne is ther no more wo, rancour, ne ire.
Whan that our pot is broke, as I have ſayde,
Every man chit, and holt him evil apayde.
Som ſayd it was long on the fire-making;
Som ſayd nay, it was long on the blowing;
(Than was I ferd, for that was min office)
Straw, quod the thridde, ye ben lewed and nice,
It was not tempred as it ought to be.
Nay, quod the fourthe, ſtint and herken me;
Becauſe our fire was not made of beche,
That is the cauſe, and other non, ſo the iché.
I can not tell wheron it was along,
But wel I wot gret ſtrif is us among.
What? quod my lord, ther n'is no more to don,
Of thiſe perils I wol beware eftſone.
I am right ſiker, that the pot was craſed.
Be as be may, be ye no thing amaſed.
As uſage is, let ſwepe the flore as ſwithe;
Plucke up your hertes and be glad and blithe.

The

The mullok on an hepe yſweped was,
And on the flore ycaſt a canevas,
And all this mullok in a ſive ythrowe,
And ſifted, and ypicked many a throwe.
Parde, quod on, ſomwhat of our metall
Yet is ther here, though that we have not all.
And though this thing miſhapped hath as now,
Another time it may be wel ynow.
We moſten put our good in aventure;
A marchant parde may not ay endure,
Truſteth me wel, in his proſperitee:
Somtime his good is drenched in the ſee,
And ſomtime cometh it ſauf unto the lond.
Pees, quod my lord, the next time I wol fond
To bring our craft all in another plite,
And but I do, ſires, let me have the wite:
Ther was defaute in ſomwhat, wel I wote.
Another ſayd, the fire was over hote.
But be it hote or cold, I dare ſay this,
That we concluden ever more amis:
We faille alway of that which we wold have,
And in our madneſſe evermore we rave.
And whan we be together everich on,
Every man ſemeth a Salomon.
But all thing, which that ſhineth as the gold,
Ne is no gold, as I have herd it told;

Ne every apple that is faire at eye,
Ne is not good, what ſo men clap or crie.
Right ſo, lo, fareth it amonges us.
He that ſemeth the wiſeſt by Jeſus
Is moſt fool, whan it cometh to the prefe;
And he that ſemeth treweſt, is a thefe.
That ſhal ye know, or that I from you wende,
By that I of my tale have made an ende.
Ther was a chanon of religioun
Amonges us, wold enfect all a toun,
Though it as gret were as was Ninive,
Rome, Aliſaundre, Troie, or other three.
His ſleightes and his infinite falſeneſſe
Ther coude no man writen, as I geſſe,
Though that he mighte live a thouſand yere;
In all this world of falſeneſſe n'is his pere.
For in his termes he wol him ſo winde,
And ſpeke his wordes in ſo ſlie a kinde,
Whan he comunen ſhal with any wight,
That he wol make him doten anon right,
But it a fend be, as himſelven is.
Ful many a man hath he begiled er this,
And wol, if that he may live any while:
And yet men gon and riden many a mile
Him for to ſeke, and have his acquaintance,
Not knowing of his falſe governance.

And

And if you luſt to yeve me audience,
I wol it tellen here in your preſence.
But, worſhipful Chanons religious,
Ne demeth not that I ſclander your hous,
Although that my tale of a Chanon be.
Of every order ſom ſhrew is parde:
And God forbede that all a compagnie
Shuld rewe a ſinguler mannes folie.
To ſclander you is no thing min entent,
But to correcten that is mis I ment.
This tale was not only told for you,
But eke for other mo: ye wote wel how
That among Criſtes apoſteles twelve
Ther was no traitour but Judas himſelve:
Than why ſhuld al the remenant have blame,
That giltles were? by you I ſay the ſame.
Save only this, if ye wol herken me,
If any Judas in your covent be,
Remeveth him betimes, I you rede,
If ſhame or los may cauſen any drede.
And be no thing diſpleſed I you pray,
But in this cas herkeneth what I ſay.

In London was a preeſt, an annuellere,
That therin dwelled hadde many a yere,
Which was ſo pleſant and ſo ſerviſable
Unto the wif, ther as he was at table,

That

That ſhe wold ſuffer him no thing to pay
For borde ne clothing, went he never ſo gay;
And ſpending ſilver had he right ynow:
Therof no force; I wol proceed as now,
And tellen forth my tale of the Chanon,
That broughte this preeſt to confuſion.
This falſe Chanon came upon a day
Unto the preeſtes chambre, ther he lay,
Beſeching him to lene him a certain
Of gold, and he wold quite it him again.
Lene me a marke, quod he, but dayes three,
And at my day I wol it quiten thee.
And if it ſo be, that thou finde me falſe,
Another day hang me up by the halſe.
This preeſt him toke a marke, and that as ſwith,
And this Chanon him thanked often ſith,
And toke his leve, and wente forth his wey:
And at the thridde day brought his money;
And to the preeſt he toke his gold again,
Wherof this preeſt was wonder glad and fain.
Certes, quod he, nothing anoieth me
To lene a man a noble, or two, or three,
Or what thing were in my poſſeſſion,
Whan he ſo trewe is of condition,
That in no wiſe he breken wol his day:
To ſwiche a man I can never ſay nay.

What?

What? quod this Chanon, ſhuld I be untrewe?
Nay, that were thing fallen al of the newe.
Trouth is a thing that I wol ever kepe
Unto the day in which that I ſhal crepe
Into my grave, and elles God forbede:
Beleveth this as ſiker as your crede.
God thanke I, and in good time be it ſayde,
That ther n'as never man yet evil apayde
For gold ne ſilver that he to me lent,
Ne never falſhede in min herte I ment.
And, ſire, (quod he) now of my privetee,
Sin ye ſo goodlich have ben unto me,
And kithed to me ſo gret gentilleſſe,
Somwhat, to quiten with your kindeneſſe,
I wol you ſhewe, and if you luſt to lere
I wol you techen pleinly the manere,
How I can werken in philoſophie.
Taketh good heed, ye ſhuln wel ſen at eye,
That I wol do a maiſtrie or I go.
Ye? quod the preeſt, ye, ſire, and wol ye ſo?
Mary therof I pray you hertily.
At your commandement, ſire, trewely,
Quod the Chanon, and elles God forbede.
Lo, how this thefe coude his ſervice bede.
Ful ſoth it is that ſwiche profered ſervice
Stinketh, as witneſſen thiſe olde wiſe;

And

And that ful ſone I wol it verifie
In this Chanon, rote of all trecherie,
That evermore delight hath and gladneſſe
(Swiche fendly thoughtes in his herte empreſſe)
How Criſtes peple he may to meſchief bring.
God kepe us from his falſe diſſimuling.
Nought wiſte this preeſt with whom that he delt,
Ne of his harme coming nothing he felt.
O ſely preeſt, o ſely innocent,
With covetiſe anon thou ſhalt be blent;
O graceles, ful blind is thy conceite,
For nothing art thou ware of the diſceite,
Which that this fox yſhapen hath to thee;
His wily wrenches thou ne mayſt not flee.
Wherfore to go to the concluſion
That referreth to thy confuſion,
Unhappy man, anon I wol me hie
To tellen thin unwit and thy folie,
And eke the falſeneſſe of that other wretch,
As ferforth as that my conning wol ſtretch.
This Chanon was my lord, ye wolden wene;
Sire hoſte, in faith, and by the heven quene,
It was another Chanon, and not he,
That can an hundred part more ſubtiltee.
He hath betraied folkes many a time;
Of his falſeneſſe it dulleth me to rime.

Ever

Ever whan that I ſpeke of his falſhede
For ſhame of him my chekes waxen rede;
Algates they beginnen for to glowe,
For redneſſe have I non, right wel I knowe,
In my viſage, for fumes diverſe
Of metals, which ye have herd me reherſe,
Conſumed han and waſted my redneſſe.
Now take hede of this Chanons curſedneſſe.
Sire, quod the Chanon, let your yeman gon
For quikſilver, that we it had anon;
And let him bringen unces two or three;
And whan he cometh, as faſte ſhul ye ſee
A wonder thing, which ye ſaw never er this.
Sire, quod the preeſt, it ſhal be don ywis.
He bad his ſervant fetchen him this thing,
And he al redy was at his bidding,
And went him forth, and came anon again
With this quikſilver, ſhortly for to ſain,
And toke thiſe unces three to the Chanoun;
And he hem laide wel and faire adoun,
And bad the ſervant coles for to bring,
That he anon might go to his werking.
The coles right anon weren yfet,
And this Chanon toke out a croſſelet
Of his boſome, and ſhewed it to the preeſt.
This inſtrument, quod he, which that thou ſeeſt,

Take

Take in thyn hond, and put thyſelf therin
Of this quikſilver an unce, and here begin
In the name of Criſt to wex a philoſophre.
Ther be ful fewe, which that I wolde profre
To ſhewen hem thus muche of my ſcience:
For here ſhul ye ſee by experience,
That this quikſilver I wol mortifie,
Right in your ſight anon withouten lie,
And make it as good ſilver and as fine,
As ther is any in your purſe or mine,
Or elles wher; and make it malliable;
And elles holdeth me falſe and unable
Amonges folk for ever to appere.
I have a pouder here that coſt me dere,
Shal make all good, for it is cauſe of all
My conning, which that I you ſhewen ſhall.
Voideth your man, and let him be therout;
And ſhet the dore, while we ben about
Our privetee, that no man us eſpie,
While that we werke in this philoſophie.
All, as he bade, fulfilled was in dede.
This ilke ſervant anon right out yede,
And his maiſter ſhette the dore anon,
And to hir labour ſpedily they gon.
This preeſt at this curſed Chanons bidding,
Upon the fire anon he ſet this thing,

And

And blew the fire, and beſied him ful faſt.
And this Chanon into the croſſelet caſt
A pouder, n'ot I never wherof it was
Ymade, other of chalk, other of glas,
Or ſomwhat elles, was not worth a flie,
To blinden with this preeſt; and bade him hie
The coles for to couchen all above
The croſſelet; for in tokening I thee love
(Quod this Chanon) thine owen hondes two
Shal werken all thing which that here is do.
Grand mercy, quod the preeſt, and was ful glad,
And couched the coles as the Chanon bad.
And while he beſy was, this fendly wretch,
This falſe Chanon (the foule fend him fetch)
Out of his boſom toke a bechen cole,
In which ful ſubtilly was made an hole,
And therin put was of ſilver limaile
An unce, and ſtopped was withouten faile
The hole with wax, to kepe the limaile in.
And underſtandeth, that this falſe gin
Was not made ther, but it was made before;
And other thinges I ſhal tell you more
Hereafterward, which that he with him brought;
Er he came ther, him to begile he thought,
And ſo he did, or that they went atwin:
Til he had torned him, coud he not blin.

It

It dulleth me, whan that I of him ſpeke;
On his falſhede fain wold I me awreke,
If I wiſt how, but he is here and ther,
He is ſo variaunt, he abit no wher.
But taketh hede, ſires, now for Goddes love.
He toke his cole, of which I ſpake above,
And in his hond he bare it prively,
And whiles the preeſt couched beſily
The coles, as I tolde you er this,
This Chanon ſayde; frend, ye don amis;
This is not couched as it ought to be,
But ſone I ſhal amenden it, quod he.
Now let me meddle therwith but a while,
For of you have I pitee by Seint Gile.
Ye ben right hot, I ſee wel how ye ſwete;
Have here a cloth and wipe away the wete.
And whiles that the preeſt wiped his face,
This Chanon toke his cole, with ſory grace,
And laied it above on the midward
Of the croſſelet, and blew wel afterward,
Til that the coles gonnen faſt to bren.
Now yeve us drinke, quod this Chanon then,
As ſwithe all ſhal be wel, I undertake.
Sitte we doun, and let us mery make.
And whanne that this Chanones bechen cole
Was brent, all the limaile out of the hole

Into

Into the croſſelet anon fell adoun;
And ſo it muſte nedes by reſoun,
Sin it above ſo even couched was;
But therof wiſt the preeſt nothing, alas!
He demed all the coles ylike good,
For of the ſleight he nothing underſtood.
And whan this Alkymiſtre ſaw his time,
Riſeth up, ſire preeſt, quod he, and ſtondeth by me;
And for I wote wel ingot have ye non,
Goth, walketh forth, and bringeth a chalk ſton;
For I wol make it of the ſame ſhap,
That is an ingot, if I may have hap.
Bring eke with you a bolle or elles a panne
Ful of water, and ye ſhul wel ſee thanne
How that our beſineſſe ſhal thrive and preve.
And yet, for ye ſhul have no miſbeleve
Ne wrong conceit of me in your abſence,
I ne wol not ben out of your preſence,
But go with you, and come with you again.
The chambre dore, ſhortly for to ſain,
They opened and ſhet, and went hir wey,
And forth with hem they caried the key,
And camen again withouten any delay.
What ſhuld I tarien all the longe day?
He toke the chalk, and ſhope it in the wiſe
Of an ingot, as I ſhal you deviſe;

I ſay, he toke out of his owen ſleve
A teine of ſilver (yvel mote he cheve)
Which that ne was but a juſt unce of weight.
And taketh heed now of his curſed ſleight;
He ſhop his ingot, in length and in brede
Of thilke teine, withouten any drede,
So ſlily, that the preeſt it not eſpide;
And in his ſleve again he gan it hide;
And from the fire he toke up his matere,
And in the ingot it put with mery chere:
And in the water-veſſel he it caſt,
Whan that him liſt, and bad the preeſt as faſt,
Loke what ther is; put in thin hond and grope;
Thou ſhalt ther finden ſilver as I hope.
What, divel of helle! ſhuld it elles be?
Shaving of ſilver, ſilver is parde.
He put his hond in, and toke up a teine
Of ſilver fine, and glad in every veine
Was this preeſt, whan he ſaw that it was ſo.
Goddes bleſſing, and his mothers alſo,
And alle Halwes, have ye, ſire Chanon,
Sayde this preeſt, and I hir maliſon,
But, and ye voucheſauf to techen me
This noble craft and this ſubtilitee,
I wol be your in all that ever I may.
Quod the Chanon, yet wol I make aſſay

The

The ſecond time, that ye mow taken hede,
And ben expert of this, and in your nede
Another day aſſay in min abſence
This diſcipline, and this crafty ſcience.
Let take another unce, quod he tho,
Of quikſilver, withouten wordes mo,
And do therwith as ye have don er this
With that other, which that now ſilver is.
The preeſt him beſieth all that ever he can
To don as this Chanon, this curſed man,
Commandeth him, and faſte blewe the fire,
For to come to the effect of his deſire.
And this Chanon right in the mene while
Al redy was this preeſt eft to begile,
And for a countenance in his hond bare
An holow ſtikke, (take kepe and beware)
In the ende of which an unce and no more
Of ſilver limaile put was, as before
Was in his cole, and ſtopped with wax wel
For to kepe in his limaile every del.
And while this preeſt was in his beſineſſe,
This Chanon with his ſtikke gan him dreſſe
To him anon, and his pouder caſt in,
As he did erſt, (the devil out of his ſkin
Him torne, I pray to God, for his falſhede,
For he was ever falſe in thought and dede)

And with his ſtikke, above the croſſelet,
That was ordained with that falſe get,
He ſtirreth the coles, til relenten gan
The wax again the fire, as every man,
But he a fool be, wote wel it mote nede.
And all that in the ſtikke was out yede,
And in the croſſelet haſtily it fell.
Now, goode ſires, what wol ye bet than wel?
Whan that this preeſt was thus begiled again,
Suppoſing nought but trouthe, ſoth to ſain,
He was ſo glad, that I can not expreſſe
In no manere his mirth and his gladneſſe,
And to the Chanon he profered eftſone
Body and good: ye, quod the Chanon, ſone,
Though poure I be, crafty thou ſhalt me finde:
I warne thee wel, yet is ther more behinde.
Is ther any coper here within? ſayd he.
Ye, ſire, quod the preeſt, I trow ther be.
Elles go beie us ſom, and that as ſwithe.
Now, goode ſire, go forth thy way and hie the.
He went his way, and with the coper he came,
And this Chanon it in his hondes name,
And of that coper weyed out an unce.
To ſimple is my tonge to pronounce,
As miniſter of my wit, the doubleneſſe
Of this Chanon, rote of all curſedneſſe.

He ſemed frendly, to hem that knew him nought,
But he was fendly, both in werk and thought.
It werieth me to tell of his falſeneſſe;
And natheles yet wol I it expreſſe,
To that entent men may beware therby,
And for non other cauſe trewely.
He put this coper into the croſſelet,
And on the fire as ſwithe he hath it ſet,
And caſt in pouder, and made the preeſt to blow,
And in his werking for to ſtoupen low,
As he did erſt, and all n'as but a jape;
Right as him liſt the preeſt he made his ape.
And afterward in the ingot he it caſt,
And in the panne put it at the laſt
Of water, and in he put his owen hond;
And in his ſleve, as ye beforen hond
Herde me tell, he had a ſilver teine;
He ſlily toke it out, this curſed heine,
(Unweting this preeſt of his falſe craft)
And in the pannes botome he it laſt.
And in the water rombleth to and fro,
And wonder prively toke up alſo
The coper teine, (not knowing thilke preeſt)
And hid it, and him hente by the breſt,
And to him ſpake, and thus ſaid in his game;
Stoupeth adoun; by God ye be to blame;

Helpeth me now, as I did you whilere;
Put in your hond, and loketh what is there.
This preeſt toke up this ſilver teine anon;
And thanne ſaid the Chanon, let us gon
With thiſe three teines which that we han wrought,
To ſom goldſmith, and wete if they ben ought:
For by my faith I n'olde for my hood
But if they weren ſilver fine and good,
And that as ſwithe wel preved ſhal it be.
Unto the goldſmith with thiſe teines three
They went anon, and put hem in aſſay
To fire and hammer: might no man ſay nay,
But that they weren as hem ought to be.
This ſoted preeſt, who was gladder than he?
Was never brid gladder agains the day,
Ne nightingale in the ſeſon of May
Was never non, that lift better to ſing,
Ne lady luſtier in carolling,
Or for to ſpeke of love and womanhede,
Ne knight in armes don a hardy dede
To ſtonden in grace of his lady dere,
Than hadde this preeſt this craft for to lere;
And to the Chanon thus he ſpake and ſeid;
For the love of God, that for us alle deid,
And as I may deſerve it unto you,
What ſhal this receit coſt? telleth me now.

By

By our lady, quod this Chanon, it is dere.
I warne you wel, that, ſave I and a frere,
In Englelond ther can no man it make.
No force, quod he; now, ſire, for Goddes ſake,
What ſhall I pay? telleth me, I you pray.
Ywis, quod he, it is ful dere I ſay.
Sire, at o word, if that you lift it have,
Ye ſhal pay fourty pound, ſo God me ſave;
And n'ere the frendſhip that ye did er this
To me, ye ſhulden payen more ywis.
This preeſt the ſum of fourty pound anon
Of nobles fet, and toke hem everich on
To this Chanon, for this ilke receit.
All his werking n'as but fraud and deceit.
Sire preeſt, he ſaid, I kepe for to have no loos
Of my craft, for I wold it were kept cloos;
And as ye love me, kepeth it ſecree:
For if men knewen all my ſubtiltee,
By God they wolden have ſo gret envie
To me, becauſe of my philoſophie,
I ſhuld be ded, ther were non other way.
God it forbede, quod the preeſt, what ye ſay.
Yet had I lever ſpenden all the good
Which that I have, (and elles were I wood)
Than that ye ſhuld fallen in ſwiche meſchefe.
For your good will, ſire, have ye right good prefe,

Quod the Chanon, and farewel, *grand mercy.*
He went his way, and never the preeſt him ſey
After that day: and whan that this preeſt ſhold
Maken aſſay, at ſwiche time as he wold,
Of this receit, farewel, it n'old not be.
Lo, thus bejaped and begiled was he:
Thus maketh he his introduction
To bringen folk to hir deſtruction.
Conſidereth, ſires, how that in eche eſtat
Betwixen men and gold ther is debat,
So ferforth that unnethes is ther non.
This multiplying ſo blint many on,
That in good faith I trowe that it be
The cauſe greteſt of ſwiche ſcarſitee.
Thiſe philoſophres ſpeke ſo miſtily
In this craft, that men cannot come therby,
For any wit that men have now adayes.
They mow wel chateren, as don thiſe jayes,
And in hir termes ſet hir luſt and peine,
But to hir purpos ſhul they never atteine.
A man may lightly lerne, if he have ought,
To multiplie, and bring his good to nought.
Lo, ſwiche a lucre is in this luſty game;
A mannes mirth it wol turne al to grame,
And emptien alſo gret and hevy purſes,
And maken folk for to purchaſen curſes

Of

Of hem, that han therto hir good ylent.
O, fy for ſhame, they that han be brent,
Alas! can they not flee the fires hete?
Ye that it uſe, I rede that ye it lete,
Leſt ye leſe all; for bet than never is late:
Never to thriven, were to long a date.
Though ye prolle ay, ye ſhul it never find;
Ye ben as bold as is Bayard the blind,
That blondereth forth, and peril caſteth non:
He is as bold to renne agains a ſton,
As for to go beſides in the way:
So faren ye that multiplien, I ſay.
If that your eyen cannot ſeen aright,
Loketh that youre mind lacke not his ſight.
For though ye loke never ſo brode and ſtare,
Ye ſhul not win a mite on that chaffare,
But waſten all that ye may rape and renne.
Withdraw the fire, leſt it to faſte brenne;
Medleth no more with that art, I mene;
For if ye don, your thrift is gon ful clene.
And right as ſwithe I wol you tellen here
What philoſophres ſain in this matere.
  Lo, thus ſaith Arnolde of the newe toun,
As his Roſarie maketh mentioun,
He ſaith right thus, withouten any lie;
Ther may no man Mercurie mortifie,

But

But it be with his brothers knowleching.
Lo, how that he, which firſte ſaid this thing,
Of philoſophres father was Hermes:
He ſaith, how that the dragon douteles
Ne dieth not, but if that he be ſlain
With his brother. And this is for to ſain,
By the dragon Mercury, and non other,
He underſtood, and brimſtone by his brother,
That out of Sol and Luna were ydrawe.
And therfore, ſaid he, take heed to my ſawe.
Let no man beſie him this art to ſeche,
But if that he the entention and ſpeche
Of philoſophres underſtonden can;
And if he do, he is a lewed man.
For this ſcience and this conning (quod he)
Is of the ſecree of ſecrees parde.
Alſo ther was a diſciple of Plato,
That on a time ſaid his maiſter to,
As his book Senior wol bere witneſſe,
And this was his demand in ſothfaſtneſſe:
Telle me the name of thilke privee ſton.
And Plato anſwerd unto him anon;
Take the ſton that Titanos men name.
Which is that? quod he. Magnetia is the ſame,
Saide Plato. Ye, ſire, and is it thus?
This is *ignotum per ignotius.*

What

What is Magnetia, good ſire, I pray?
It is a water that is made, I ſay,
Of the elementes foure, quod Plato.
Tell me the rote, good ſire, quod he tho,
Of that water, if that it be your will.
Nay, nay, quod Plato, certain that I n'ill.
The philoſophres were ſworne everich on,
That they ne ſhuld diſcover it unto non,
Ne in no book it write in no manere;
For unto God it is ſo lefe and dere,
That he wol not that it diſcovered be,
But wher it liketh to his deitee
Man for to enſpire, and eke for to defende
Whom that him liketh; lo, this is the ende.
Than thus conclude I, ſin that God of heven
Ne wol not that the philoſophres neven,
How that a man ſhal come unto this ſton,
I rede as for the beſt to let it gon.
For who ſo maketh God his adverſary,
As for to werken any thing in contrary
Of his will, certes never ſhal he thrive,
Though that he multiply terme of his live.
And ther a point; for ended is my tale.
God ſend every good man bote of his bale.

THE

THE MANCIPLES PROLOGUE.

WETE ye not wher ſtondeth a litel toun,
Which that ycleped is Bob up and doun,
Under the blee, in Canterbury way?
Ther gan our hoſte to jape and to play,
And ſayde; ſires, what? Dun is in the mire.
Is ther no man for praiere ne for hire,
That wol awaken our felaw behind?
A thefe him might ful lightly rob and bind.
See how he nappeth, ſee, for cockes bones,
As he wold fallen from his hors atones.
Is that a coke of London, with meſchance?
Do him come forth, he knoweth his penance;
For he ſhal tell a tale by my fey,
Although it be not worth a botel hey.
Awake thou coke, quod he, God yeve thee ſorwe,
What aileth thee to ſlepen by the morwe?
Haſt thou had fleen al night, or art thou dronke?
Or haſt thou with ſom quene al night yſwonke,
So that thou mayſt not holden up thin hed?
This coke, that was ful pale and nothing red,
Sayd to our hoſte; ſo God my ſoule bleſſe,
As ther is falle on me ſwiche hevineſſe,
N'ot I nat why, that me were lever to ſlepe,
Than the beſt gallon wine that is in Chepe.

Wel,

Wel, quod the Manciple, if it may don eſe
To thee, ſire Coke, and to no wight diſpleſe,
Which that here rideth in this compagnie,
And that our hoſte wol of his curteſie,
I wol as now excuſe thee of thy tale;
For in good faith thy viſage is ful pale:
Thin eyen daſen, ſothly as me thinketh,
And wel I wot, thy breth ful ſoure ſtinketh,
That ſheweth wel thou art not wel diſpoſed:
Of me certain thou ſhalt not ben ygloſed.
See how he galpeth, lo, this dronken wight,
As though he wold us ſwalow anon right.
Hold cloſe thy mouth, man, by thy father kin:
The devil of helle ſet his foot therin,
Thy curſed breth enfecten woll us alle:
Fy ſtinking ſwine, fy, foul mote thee befalle.
A, taketh heed, ſires, of this luſty man.
Now, ſwete ſire, wol ye juſt at the fan?
Therto, me thinketh, ye be wel yſhape.
I trow that ye have dronken win of ape,
And that is whan men playen with a ſtraw.
And with this ſpeche the coke waxed all wraw,
And on the Manciple he gan nod faſt
For lacke of ſpeche; and doun his hors him caſt,
Wher as he lay, til that men him up toke.
This was a faire chivachee of a coke:

Alas

Alas that he ne had hold him by his ladel!
And er that he agen were in the ſadel,
Ther was gret ſhoving bothe to and fro
To lift him up, and mochel care and wo,
So unweldy was this ſely palled goſt:
And to the Manciple than ſpake our hoſt.
  Becauſe that drinke hath domination
Upon this man, by my ſalvation
I trow he lewedly wol tell his tale.
For were it win, or old or moiſty ale,
That he hath dronke, he ſpeketh in his noſe,
And ſneſeth faſt, and eke he hath the poſe.
He alſo hath to don more than ynough
To kepe him on his capel out of the ſlough:
And if he falle from of his capel eftſone,
Than ſhul we alle have ynough to done
In lifting up his hevy dronken cors.
Tell on thy tale, of him make I no force.
  But yet, Manciple, in faith thou art to nice,
Thus openly to repreve him of his vice:
Another day he wol paraventure
Recleimen thee, and bring thee to the lure:
I mene, he ſpeken wol of ſmale thinges,
As for to pinchen at thy rekeninges,
That were not honeſt, if it came to prefe.
  Quod the Manciple, that were a gret meſchefe:

So

So might he lightly bring me in the ſnare.
Yet had I lever payen for the mare,
Which he rit on, than he ſhuld with me ſtrive.
I wol not wrathen him, ſo mote I thrive;
That that I ſpake, I ſayd it in my bourd.
And wete ye what? I have here in my gourd
A draught of win, ye of a ripe grape,
And right anon ye ſhul ſeen a good jape.
This coke ſhal drinke therof, if that I may;
Up peine of my lif he wol not ſay nay.
  And certainly, to tellen as it was,
Of this veſſell the coke dranke faſt, (alas!
What nedeth it? he dranke ynough beforne)
And whan he hadde pouped in his horne,
To the Manciple he toke the gourd again.
And of that drinke the coke was wonder fain,
And thonked him in ſwiche wiſe as he coude.
  Than gan our hoſte to laughen wonder loude,
And ſayd; I ſee wel it is neceſſary
Wher that we gon good drinke with us to cary;
For that wol turnen rancour and diſeſe
To accord and love, and many a wrong apeſe.
  O Bacchus, Bacchus, bleſſed be thy name,
That ſo canſt turnen erneſt into game;
Worſhip and thonke be to thy deitee.
Of that matere ye get no more of me.

Tell on thy tale, Manciple, I thee pray.
Wel, ſire, quod he, now herkeneth what I ſay.

THE MANCIPLES TALE.

WHAN Phebus dwelled here in erth adoun,
As olde bookes maken mentioun,
He was the moſte luſty bacheler
Of all this world, and eke the beſt archer.
He ſlow Phiton the ſerpent, as he lay
Sleping agains the ſonne upon a day;
And many another noble worthy dede
He with his bow wrought, as men mowen rede.
Playen he coudé on every minſtralcie,
And ſingen, that it was a melodie
To heren of his clere vois the ſoun.
Certes the king of Thebes, Amphioun,
That with his ſinging walled the citee,
Coud never ſingen half ſo wel as he.
Therto he was the ſemelieſte man,
That is or was, ſithen the world began;
What nedeth it his feture to deſcrive?
For in this world n'is non ſo faire on live.
He was therwith fulfilled of gentilleſſe,
Of honour, and of parfite worthineſſe.
This Phebus, that was flour of bachelerie,
As wel in fredom, as in chivalrie,

For

For his disport, in signe eke of victorie
Of Phiton, so as telleth us the storie,
Was wont to beren in his hond a bowe.
Now had this Phebus in his hous a crowe,
Which in a cage he fostred many a day,
And taught it speken, as men teche a jay:
Whit was this crowe, as is a snow-whit swan,
And contrefete the speche of every man
He coude, whan he shulde tell a tale.
Therwith in all this world no nightingale
Ne coude by an hundred thousand del
Singen so wonder merily and wel.
Now had this Phebus in his hous a wif,
Which that he loved more than his lif,
And night and day did ever his diligence
Hire for to plese, and don hire reverence:
Save only, if that I the soth shal sain,
Jelous he was, and wold have kept hire fain,
For him were loth yjaped for to be;
And so is every wight in swiche degree;
But all for nought, for it availeth nought.
A good wif, that is clene of werk and thought,
Shuld not be kept in non await certain;
And trewely the labour is in vain
To kepe a shrewe, for it wol not be.
This hold I for a veray nicetee,

To ſpillen labour for to kepen wives;
Thus writen olde clerkes in hir lives.
But now to purpos, as I firſt began.
This worthy Phebus doth all that he can
To pleſen hire, wening thurgh ſwiche pleſance,
And for his manhood and his governance,
That no man ſhulde put him from hire grace:
But God it wote, ther may no man embrace
As to deſtreine a thing, which that nature
Hath naturelly ſet in a creature.
Take any brid, and put it in a cage,
And do all thin entente, and thy corage,
To foſter it tendrely with mete and drinke
Of alle deintees that thou canſt bethinke,
And kepe it al ſo clenely as thou may;
Although the cage of gold be never ſo gay,
Yet had this brid, by twenty thouſand fold,
Lever in a foreſt, that is wilde and cold,
Gon eten wormes, and ſwiche wretchedneſſe.
For ever this brid will don his beſineſſe
To eſcape out of his cage whan that he may:
His libertee the brid deſireth ay.
Let take a cat, and foſter hire with milke
And tendre fleſh, and make hire couche of ſilke,
And let hire ſee a mous go by the wall,
Anon ſhe weiveth milke and fleſh, and all,

And

And every deintee that is in that hous,
Swiche appetit hath ſhe to ete the mous.
Lo, here hath kind hire domination,
And appetit fleméth diſcretion.
A ſhe-wolf hath alſo a vilains kind;
The lewedeſte wolf that ſhe may find,
Or leſt of reputation, wol ſhe take
In time whan hire luſt to have a make.
All thiſe enſamples ſpeke I by thiſe men
That ben untrewe, and nothing by women.
For men have ever a likerous appetit
On lower thing to parforme hir delit
Than on hir wives, be they never ſo faire,
Ne never ſo trewe, ne ſo debonaire.
Fleſh is ſo newefangle, with meſchance,
That we ne con in nothing have pleſance,
That ſouneth unto vertue any while.
This Phebus, which that thought upon no gile,
Diſceived was for all his jolitee:
For under him another hadde ſhe,
A man of litel reputation,
Nought worth to Phebus in compariſon:
The more harme is; it happeth often ſo;
Of which ther cometh mochel harme and wo.
And ſo befell, whan Phebus was abſent,
His wif anon hath for hire lemman ſent.

Hire lemman? certes that is a knaviſh ſpeche.
Foryeve it me, and that I you beſeche.
The wiſe Plato ſayth, as ye mow rede,
The word muſt nede accorden with the dede,
If men ſhul tellen proprely a thing,
The word muſt coſin be to the werking.
I am a boiſtous man, right thus ſay I;
Ther is no difference trewely
Betwix a wif that is of high degree,
(If of hire body diſhoneſt ſhe be)
And any poure wenche, other than this,
(If it ſo be they werken both amis)
But, for the gentil is in eſtat above,
She ſhal be cleped his lady and his love;
And, for that other is a poure woman,
She ſhal be cleped his wenche and his lemman:
And God it wote, min owen dere brother,
Men lay as low that on as lith that other.
Right ſo betwix a titleles tiraunt
And an outlawe, or any thefe erraunt,
The ſame I ſay, ther is no difference,
(To Alexander told was this ſentence)
But, for the tyrant is of greter might
By force of meinie for to ſle doun right,
And brennen hous and home, and make all plain,
Lo, therfore is he cleped a capitain;

And

And, for the outlawe hath but ſmale meinie,
And may not do ſo gret an harme as he,
Ne bring a contree to ſo gret meſchiefe,
Men clepen him an outlawe or a thefe.
But, for I am a man not textuel,
I wol not tell of textes never a del;
I wol go to my tale, as I began.
Whan Phebus wif had ſent for hire lemman,
Anon they wroughten all hir luſt volage.
This white crowe, that heng ay in the cage,
Beheld hir werke, and ſayde never a word:
And whan that home was come Phebus the lord,
This crowe ſong, cuckow, cuckow, cuckow.
What? brid, quod Phebus, what ſong ſingeſt thou now?
Ne were thou wont ſo merily to ſing,
That to my herte it was a rejoyſing
To here thy vois? alas! what ſong is this?
By God, quod he, I ſinge not amis.
Phebus, (quod he) for all thy worthineſſe,
For all thy beautee, and all thy gentilleſſe,
For all thy ſong, and all thy minſtralcie,
For all thy waiting, blered is thin eye,
With on of litel reputation,
Not worth to thee as in compariſon
The mountance of a gnat, ſo mote I thrive;
For on thy bedde thy wif I ſaw him ſwive,

What wol you more? the crowe anon him told,
By ſade tokenes, and by wordes bold,
How that his wif had don hire lecherie
Him to gret ſhame, and to gret vilanie;
And told him oft, he ſawe it with his eyen.
This Phebus gan awayward for to wrien;
Him thought his woful herte braſt atwo.
His bowe he bent, and ſet therin a flo;
And in his ire he hath his wif yſlain:
This is the effect, ther is no more to ſain.
For ſorwe of which he brake his minſtralcie,
Both harpe and lute, giterne, and ſautrie;
And eke he brake his arwes, and his bowe;
And after that thus ſpake he to the crowe.
Traitour, quod he, with tonge of ſcorpion,
Thou haſt me brought to my confuſion:
Alas that I was wrought! why n'ere I dede?
O dere wif, o gemme of luſtyhede,
That were to me ſo ſade, and eke ſo trewe,
Now lieſt thou ded, with face pale of hewe,
Ful gilteles, that durſt I ſwere ywis.
O rakel hond, to do ſo foule a mis.
O troubled wit, o ire reccheles,
That unaviſed ſmiteſt gilteles.
O wantruſt, ful of falſe ſuſpecion,
Wher was thy wit and thy diſcretion?

O, every

O, every man beware of rakelneſſe,
Ne trowe no thing withouten ſtrong witneſſe.
Smite not to ſone, er that ye weten why,
And beth aviſed wel and ſikerly,
Or ye do any execution
Upon your ire for ſuſpecion.
Alas! a thouſand folk hath rakel ire
Fully fordon, and brought hem in the mire.
Alas! for forwe I wol myſelven ſle.
And to the crowe, o falſe thefe, ſaid he,
I wol thee quite anon thy falſe tale.
Thou ſong whilom, like any nightingale,
Now ſhalt thou, falſe thefe, thy ſong forgon,
And eke thy white fethers everich on,
Ne never in all thy lif ne ſhalt thou ſpeke;
Thus ſhul men on a traitour ben awreke.
Thou and thin ofspring ever ſhul be blake,
Ne never ſwete noiſe ſhul ye make,
But ever crie ageins tempeſt and rain,
In token, that thurgh thee my wif is ſlain.
And to the crowe he ſtert, and that anon,
And pulled his white fethers everich on,
And made him blak, and raft him all his ſong
And eke his ſpeche, and out at dore him flong
Unto the devil, which I him betake;
And for this cauſe ben alle crowes blake.

Lordings, by this enſample, I you pray,
Beth ware, and taketh kepe what that ye ſay;
Ne telleth never man in all your lif,
How that another man hath dight his wif;
He wol you haten mortally certain.
Dan Salomon, as wiſe clerkes ſain,
Techeth a man to kepe his tonge wel;
But as I ſayd, I am not textuel.
But natheles thus taughte me my dame;
My ſone, thinke on the crowe a Goddes name.
My ſone, kepe wel thy tonge, and kepe thy frend;
A wicked tonge is werſe than a fend:
My ſone, from a fende men may hem bleſſe.
My ſone, God of his endeles goodneſſe
Walled a tonge with teeth, and lippes eke,
For man ſhuld him aviſen what he ſpeke.
My ſone, ful often for to mochel ſpeche
Hath many a man ben ſpilt, as clerkes teche;
But for a litel ſpeche aviſedly
Is no man ſhent, to ſpeken generally.
My ſone, thy tonge ſhuldeſt thou reſtreine
At alle time, but whan thou doſt thy peine
To ſpeke of God in honour and prayere.
The firſte vertue, ſone, if thou wolt lere,
Is to reſtreine, and kepen wel thy tonge;
Thus leren children, whan that they be yonge.

My

My ſone, of mochel ſpeking evil aviſed,
Ther leſſe ſpeking had ynough ſuffiſed,
Cometh mochel harme; thus was me told and taught;
In mochel ſpeche ſinne wanteth naught.
Woſt thou wherof a rakel tonge ſerveth?
Right as a ſwerd forcutteth and forkerveth
An arme atwo, my dere ſone, right ſo
A tonge cutteth frendſhip all atwo.
A jangler is to God abhominable.
Rede Salomon, ſo wiſe and honourable,
Rede David in his Pſalmes, rede Senek.
My ſone, ſpeke not, but with thyn hed thou beck,
Diſſimule as thou were defe, if that thou here
A janglour ſpeke of perilous matere.
The Fleming ſayth, and lerne if that thee leſt,
That litel jangling cauſeth mochel reſt.
My ſone, if thou no wicked word haſt ſaid,
Thee thar not dreden for to be bewraid;
But he that hath miſſayd, I dare wel ſain,
He may by no way clepe his word again.
Thing that is ſayd is ſayd, and forth it goth,
Though him repent, or be him never ſo loth,
He is his thral, to whom that he hath ſayd
A tale, of which he is now evil apaid.
My ſone, beware, and be non auctour newe
Of tidings, whether they ben falſe or trewe;

Wher

Wher ſo thou come, amonges high or lowe,
Kepe wel thy tonge, and thinke upon the crowe.

THE PERSONES PROLOGUE.

By that the Manciple had his tale ended,
The ſonne fro the ſouth line was deſcended
So lowe, that it ne was not to my ſight
Degrees nine and twenty as of hight.
Foure of the clok it was tho, as I geſſe,
For enleven foot, a litel more or leſſe,
My ſhadow was at thilke time, as there,
Of ſwiche feet as my lengthe parted were
In ſix feet equal of proportion.
Therwith the mones exaltation,
In mene Libra, alway gan aſcende,
As we were entring at the thorpes ende.
For which our hoſte, as he was wont to gie,
As in this cas, our jolly compagnie,
Said in this wiſe; lordings, everich on,
Now lacketh us no tales mo than on.
Fulfilled is my ſentence and my decree;
I trowe that we han herd of eche degree.
Almoſt fulfilled is myn ordinance;
I pray to God ſo yeve him right good chance,
That telleth us this tale luſtily.
Sire preeſt, quod he, art thou a vicary?

Or

Or art thou a Perſon? ſay ſoth by thy fay.
Be what thou be, ne breke thou not our play;
For every man, ſave thou, hath told his tale.
Unbokel, and ſhew us what is in thy male.
For trewely me thinketh by thy chere,
Thou ſhuldeſt knitte up wel a gret matere.
Tell us a fable anon, for cockes bones.
This Perſon him anſwered al at ones;
Thou geteſt fable non ytold for me,
For Poule, that writeth unto Timothe,
Repreveth hem that weiven ſothfaſtneſſe,
And tellen fables, and ſwiche wretchedneſſe.
Why ſhuld I ſowen draf out of my fiſt,
Whan I may ſowen whete, if that me liſt?
For which I ſay, if that you liſt to here
Moralitee, and vertuous matere,
And than that ye wol yeve me audience,
I wold ful fain at Criſtes reverence
Don you plefance leful, as I can.
But truſteth wel, I am a ſotherne man,
I cannot geſte, rom, ram, ruf, by my letter,
And, God wote, rime hold I but litel better.
And therfore if you liſt, I wol not gloſe,
I wol you tell a litel tale in proſe,
To knitte up all this feſte, and make an ende:
And Jeſu for his grace wit me ſende

To ſhewen you the way in this viage
Of thilke parfit glorious pilgrimage,
That hight Jeruſalem celeſtial.
And if ye vouchesauf, anon I ſhal
Beginne upon my tale, for which I pray
Tell your avis, I can no better ſay.
But natheles this meditation
I put it ay under correction
Of clerkes, for I am not textuel;
I take but the ſentence, truſteth me wel.
Therfore I make a proteſtation,
That I wol ſtanden to correction.
Upon this word we han aſſented ſone:
For as us ſemed, it was for to don,
To enden in ſom vertuous ſentence,
And for to yeve him ſpace and audience;
And bade our hoſte he ſhulde to him ſay,
That alle we to tell his tale him pray.
Our hoſte had the wordes for us alle:
Sire preeſt, quod he, now faire you befalle;
Say what you liſt, and we ſhul gladly here.
And with that word he ſaid in this manere;
Telleth, quod he, your meditatioun,
But haſteth you, the ſonne wol adoun.
Beth fructuous, and that in litel ſpace,
And to do wel God ſende you his grace.

THE

THE PERSONES TALE.

Our ſwete Lord God of heven, that no man wol periſh, but wol that we comen all to the knowleching of him, and to the bliſsful lif that is pardurable, amoneſteth us by the Prophet Jeremie, that ſayth in this wiſe: Stondeth upon the wayes, and ſeeth and axeth of the olde pathes; that is to ſay, of olde ſentences; which is the good way: and walketh in that way, and ye ſhul finde refreſhing for your ſoules. Many ben the wayes ſpirituel that leden folk to our Lord Jeſu Criſt, and to the regne of glory: of which wayes, ther is a ful noble way, and wel covenable, which may not faille to man ne to woman, that thurgh ſinne hath miſgon fro the right way of Jeruſalem celeſtial; and this way is cleped penance; of which man ſhuld gladly herken and enqueren with all his herte, to wete, what is penance, and whennes it is cleped penance, and how many maneres ben of actions or werkings of penance, and how many ſpices ther ben of penance, and which thinges apperteinen and behoven to penance, and which thinges diſtroublen penance.

Seint

Seint Ambroſe ſayth, That penance is the plaining of man for the gilt that he hath don, and no more to do any thing for which him ought to plaine. And ſom doctour ſayth: Penance is the waymenting of man that ſorweth for his ſinne, and peineth himſelf, for he hath miſdon. Penance, with certain circumſtances, is veray repentance of man, that holdeth himſelf in ſorwe and other peine for his giltes: and for he ſhal be veray penitent, he ſhal firſt bewailen the ſinnes that he hath don, and ſtedfaſtly purpoſen in his herte to have ſhrift of mouth, and to don ſatisfaction, and never to don thing, for which him ought more to bewayle or complaine, and to continue in good werkes: or elles his repentance may not availe. For as Seint Iſidor ſayth; he is a japer and a gabber, and not veray repentant, that eftſones doth thing, for which him oweth to repent. Weping, and not for to ſtint to do ſinne, may not availe. But natheles, men ſhuld hope, that at every time that man falleth, be it never ſo oft, that he may ariſe thurgh penance, if he have grace: but certain, it is gret doute. For as ſaith Seint Gregorie; unnethes ariſeth he out of ſinne, that is charged with the charge of evil uſage.

And

And therfore repentant folk, that ſtint for to ſinne, and forlete ſinne or that ſinne forlete hem, holy chirche holdeth hem ſiker of hir ſalvation. And he that ſinneth, and verailly repenteth him in his laſt day, holy chirche yet hopeth his ſalvation, by the grete mercy of our Lord Jeſu Criſt, for his repentance; but take ye the ſiker and certain way.

And now ſith I have declared you, what thing is penance, now ye ſhul underſtond, that ther ben three actions of penance. The firſt is, that a man be baptiſed after that he hath ſinned. Seint Auguſtine ſayth; but he be penitent for his old ſinful lif, he may not beginne the newe clene lif: for certes, if he be baptiſed without penitence of his old gilt, he receiveth the marke of baptiſme, but not the grace, ne the remiſſion of his ſinnes, til he have veray repentance. Another defaute is, that men don dedly ſinne after that they have received baptiſme. The thridde defaute is, that men fall in venial ſinnes after hir baptiſme, fro day to day. Therof ſayth Seint Auguſtine, that penance of good and humble folk is the penance of every day.

The ſpices of penance ben three. That on

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of hem is ſolempne, another is commune, and the thridde privee. Thilke penance, that is ſolempne, is in two maneres; as to be put out of holy chirche in lenton, for ſlaughter of children, and ſwiche maner thing. Another is whan a man hath ſinned openly, of which ſinne the fame is openly ſpoken in the contree: and than holy chirche by jugement diſtreyneth him for to do open penance. Commun penance is, that preeſtes enjoinen men in certain cas: as for to go paraventure naked on pilgrimage, or bare foot. Privee penance is thilke, that men don all day for privee ſinnes, of which we ſhrive us prively, and receive privee penance.

Now ſhalt thou underſtond what is behoveful and neceſſary to every parfit penance: and this ſtont on three thinges; contrition of herte, confeſſion of mouth, and ſatisfaction. For which ſayth Seint John Chriſoſtome: penance diſtreineth a man to accept benignely every peine, that him is enjoined, with contrition of herte, and ſhrift of mouth, with ſatisfaction, and werking of all maner humilitee. And this is fruitful penance ayenſt tho three thinges, in which we wrathen our Lord Jeſu Criſt: this

this is to ſay, by delit in thinking, by recheleſneſſe in ſpeking, and by wicked ſinful werking. And ayenſt theſe wicked giltes is penance, that may be likened unto a tree.

The rote of this tree is contrition, that hideth him in the herte of him that is veray repentant, right as the rote of the tree hideth him in the erthe. Of this rote of contrition ſpringeth a ſtalke, that bereth branches and leves of confeſſion, and fruit of ſatisfaction. Of which Criſt ſayth in his goſpell; doth ye digne fruit of penitence; for by this fruit mow men underſtonde and knowe this tree, and not by the rote that is hid in the herte of man, ne by the branches, ne the leves of confeſſion. And therfore our Lord Jeſu Criſt ſaith thus; by the fruit of hem ſhal ye knowe hem. Of this rote alſo ſpringeth a ſeed of grace, which ſeed is moder of ſikerneſſe, and this ſeed is eger and hote. The grace of this ſeed ſpringeth of God, thurgh remembrance on the day of dome, and on the peines of helle. Of this matere ſaith Salomon, that in the drede of God man forletteth his ſinne. The hete of this ſede is the love of God, and the deſiring of the joye perdurable. This hete draweth the herte of man

to God, and doth him hate his ſinne. For ſothly, ther is nothing that ſavoureth ſo ſote to a child, as the milke of his norice, ne nothing is to him more abhominable than that milke, whan it is medled with other mete. Right ſo the ſinful man that loveth his ſinne, him ſemeth, that it is to him moſt ſwete of any thing; but fro that time that he loveth ſadly our Lord Jeſu Criſt, and deſireth the lif perdurable, ther is to him nothing more abhominable. For ſothly the lawe of God is the love of God. For which David the prophet ſayth; I have loved thy lawe, and hated wickedneſſe: he that loveth God, kepeth his lawe and his word. This tree ſaw the prophet Daniel in ſpirit, upon the viſion of Nabuchodonoſor, whan he counſeiled him to do penance. Penance is the tree of lif, to hem that it receiven: and he that holdeth him in veray penance, is blisful, after the ſentence of Salomon.

In this penance or contrition man ſhal underſtond foure thinges; that is to ſay, what is contrition; and which ben the cauſes that moven a man to contrition; and how he ſhuld be contrite; and what contrition availeth to the ſoule. Than is it thus, that contrition is

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the veray ſorwe that a man receiveth in his herte for his ſinnes, with ſad purpos to ſhriven him, and to do penance, and never more to don ſinne. And this ſorwe ſhal be in this maner, as ſayth Seint Bernard; it ſhal ben hevy and grevous, and ful ſharpe and poinant in herte; firſt, for a man hath agilted his Lord and his creatour; and more ſharpe and poinant, for he hath agilted his father celeſtial; and yet more ſharpe and poinant, for he hath wrathed and agilted him that boughte him, that with his precious blod hath delivered us fro the bondes of ſinne, and fro the crueltee of the devil, and fro the peines of helle.

The cauſes that ought to meve a man to contrition ben ſixe. Firſt, a man ſhal remembre him of his ſinnes. But loke that that remembrance ne be to him no delit, by no way, but grete ſhame and ſorwe for his ſinnes. For Job ſayth, ſinful men don werkes worthy of confeſſion. And therfore ſayth Ezechiel; I wol remembre me all the yeres of my lif, in the bitterneſſe of my herte. And God ſayth in the Apocalipſe; remembre you fro whens that ye ben fall, for before the time that ye ſinned, ye weren children of God, and limmes of the regne

of God; but for your ſinne ye ben waxen thral and foule; membres of the fende; hate of angels; ſclaunder of holy chirche, and fode of the falſe ſerpent; perpetuel matere of the fire of helle; and yet more foule and abhominable, for ye treſpaſſen ſo oft times, as doth the hound that torneth again to ete his owen ſpewing; and yet fouler, for your long continuing in ſinne, and your ſinful uſage, for which ye be roten in your ſinnes, as a beeſt in his donge. Swiche manere thoughtes make a man to have ſhame of his ſinne, and no delit; as God ſaith, by the Prophet Ezechiel; ye ſhul remembre you of your wayes, and they ſhul diſpleſe you. Sothly, ſinnes ben the waies that lede folk to hell.

The ſecond cauſe that ought to make a man to have diſdeigne of ſinne is this, that, as ſaith Seint Peter, who ſo doth ſinne, is thral to ſinne, and ſinne putteth a man in gret thraldom. And therfore ſayth the Prophet Ezechiel; I went ſorweful, and had diſdeigne of myſelf. Certes, wel ought a man have diſdeigne of ſinne, and withdrawe him fro that thraldom and vilany. And lo, what ſayth Seneke in this mater. He ſaith thus; though I wiſt, that neither

ther God ne man ſhuld never know it, yet wold I have diſdeigne for to do ſinne. And the ſame Seneke alſo ſayth: I am borne to greter thinges, than to be thral to my body, or for to make of my body a thral. Ne a fouler thral may no man, ne woman, make of his body, than for to yeve his body to ſinne. Al were it the fouleſt chorle, or the fouleſt woman that liveth, and leſt of value, yet is he than more foule, and more in ſervitude. Ever fro the higher degree that man falleth, the more is he thral, and more to God and to the world vile and abhominable. O good God, wel ought a man have diſdeigne of ſinne, ſith that thurgh ſinne, ther he was free, he is made bond. And therfore ſayth Seint Auguſtine: if thou haſt diſdeigne of thy ſervant, if he offend or ſinne, have thou than diſdeigne, that thou thy ſelf ſhuldeſt do ſinne. Take reward of thin owen value, that thou ne be to foule to thyſelf. Alas! wel oughten they than have diſdeigne to be ſervants and thralles to ſinne, and ſore to be aſhamed of hemſelf, that God of his endles goodneſſe hath ſette in high eſtat, or yeve hem witte, ſtrength of body, hele, beautee, or proſperitee, and bought hem fro the deth

with his herte blood, that they ſo unkindly agains his gentilleſſe, quiten him ſo vilainſly, to ſlaughter of hir owen ſoules. O good God! ye women that ben of gret beautee, remembreth you on the proverbe of Salomon, that likeneth a faire woman, that is a fool of hire body, to a ring of gold that is worne in the groine of a ſowe: for right as a ſowe wroteth in every ordure, ſo wroteth ſhe hire beautee in ſtinking ordure of ſinne.

The thridde cauſe, that ought to meve a man to contrition, is drede of the day of dome, and of the horrible peines of helle. For as Seint Jerome ſayth: at every time that me remembreth of the day of dome, I quake: for whan I ete or drinke, or do what ſo I do, ever ſemeth me that the trompe ſowneth in min eres: riſeth ye up that ben ded, and cometh to the jugement. O good God! moche ought a man to drede ſwiche a jugement, ther as we ſhul be alle, as Seint Poule ſayth, before the ſtreit jugement of oure Lord Jeſu Criſt; wheras he ſhal make a general congregation, wheras no man may be abſent; for certes ther availeth non eſſoine ne non excuſation; and not only, that our defautes ſhul be juged, but eke that all

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our werkes ſhul openly be knowen. And, as ſayth Seint Bernard, ther ne ſhal no pleting availe, ne no ſleight: we ſhal yeve rekening of everich idle word. Ther ſhal we have a juge that may not be deceived ne corrupt; and why? for certes, all our thoughtes ben diſcovered, as to him: ne for prayer, ne for mede, he wil not be corrupt. And therfore ſaith Salomon: the wrath of God ne wol not ſpare no wight, for prayer ne for yeft. And therfore at the day of dome ther is non hope to eſcape. Wherfore, as ſayth Seint Anſelme, ful gret anguiſh ſhal the ſinful folk have at that time: ther ſhal be the ſterne and wroth juge ſitting above, and under him the horrible pitte of helle open, to deſtroy him that wolde not beknowen his ſinnes, which ſinnes ſhullen openly be ſhewed before God and before every creature: and on the left ſide, mo Divels than any herte may thinke, for to hary and drawe the ſinful ſoules to the pitte of helle: and within the hertes of folk ſhal be the biting conſcience, and without forth ſhal be the world all brenning. Whither than ſhal the wretched ſoule flee to hide him? Certes he may not hide him, he muſt come forth and ſhewe him. For certes, as ſaith

Seint Jerome, the erth ſhal caſt him out of it, and the ſee, and alſo the aire, that ſhal be ful of thonder clappes and lightnings. Now ſothly, who ſo wil remembre him of theſe thinges, I geſſe that his ſinnes ſhal not torne him to delit, but to grete ſorwe, for drede of the peine of helle. And therfore ſaith Job to God: ſuffer, Lord, that I may a while bewaile and bewepe, or I go without retorning to the derke londe, ycovered with the derkeneſſe of deth; to the londe of miſeſe and of derkeneſſe, wheras is the ſhadowe of deth; wher as is non ordre ne ordinance, but griſly drede that ever ſhal laſt. Lo, here may ye ſee, that Job prayed reſpite a while, to bewepe and waile his treſpas: for ſothely on day of reſpite is better than all the treſour of this world. And for as moche as a man may acquite himſelf before God by penitence in this world, and not by treſour, therfore ſhuld he pray to God to yeve him reſpite a while, to bewepen and bewailen his treſpas: for certes, all the ſorwe that a man might make fro the beginning of the world, n'is but a litel thing, at regard of the ſorwe of helle. The cauſe why that Job clepeth helle the londe of derkeneſſe; underſtondeth, that he clepeth it

londe or erth, for it is ſtable and never ſhal faile; and derke, for he that is in helle hath defaute of light naturel; for certes the derke light, that ſhal come out of the fire that ever ſhal brenne, ſhall torne hem all to peine that be in helle, for it ſheweth hem the horrible Divels that hem turmenten. Covered with the derkeneſſe of deth; that is to ſay, that he that is in helle, ſhal have defaute of the ſight of God; for certes the ſight of God is the lif perdurable. The derkneſſe of deth, ben the ſinnes that the wretched man hath don, which that diſtroublen him to ſee the face of God, right as a derke cloud betwene us and the ſonne. It is londe of miſeſe, becauſe that ther ben three maner of defautes ayenſt three thinges that folk of this world han in this preſent lif; that is to ſay, honoures, delites, and richeſſes. Ayenſt honour have they in helle ſhame and confuſion: for wel ye wote, that men clepen honour the reverence that man doth to man; but in helle is non honour ne reverence; for certes no more reverence ſhal be don ther to a king, than to a knave. For which God ſayth by the Prophet Jeremie; the folk, that me deſpiſen, ſhal be in deſpite. Honour is alſo cleped

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gret lordeſhip. Ther ſhal no wight ſerven other, but of harme and turment. Honour is alſo cleped gret dignitee and highneſſe; but in helle ſhal they be alle fortroden of divels. As God ſaith; the horrible Divels ſhul gon and comen upon the hedes of dampned folk: and this is, for as moche as the higher that they were in this preſent lif, the more ſhul they be abated and defouled in helle. Ayenſt the richeſſe of this world ſhul they have miſeſe of poverte, and this poverte ſhal be in foure thinges: in defaute of treſour; of which David ſayth; the riche folk that enbraceden and oneden all hir herte to treſour of this world, ſhul ſlepe in the ſleping of deth, and nothing ne ſhul they find in hir hondes of all hir treſour. And moreover, the miſeſe of helle ſhal be in defaute of mete and drink. For God ſayth thus by Moyſes: they ſhul be waſted with honger, and the briddes of helle ſhul devoure hem with bitter deth, and the gall of the dragon ſhal ben hir drinke, and the venime of the dragon hir morſels. And further over hir miſeſe ſhal be in defaute of clothing, for they ſhul be naked in body, as of clothing, ſave the fire in which they brenne, and other filthes; and naked ſhul they

they be in ſoule, of all maner vertues, which that is the clothing of the ſoule. Wher ben than the gay robes, the ſofte ſhetes, and the fyn ſhertes? Lo, what ſayth God of heven by the Prophet Eſaie, that under hem ſhul be ſtrewed mothes, and hir covertures ſhul ben of wormes of helle. And further over hir miſeſe ſhal be in defaute of frendes, for he is not poure that hath good frendes: but ther is no frend; for neither God ne no good creature ſhal be frend to hem, and everich of hem ſhal hate other with dedly hate. The ſonnes and the doughters ſhal rebel ayenſt father and mother, and kinred ayenſt kinred, and chiden, and deſpiſen eche other, both day and night, as God ſayth by the Prophet Micheas. And the loving children, that whilom loveden ſo fleſhly, everich of hem wold eten other if they might. For how ſhuld they love togeder in the peines of helle, whan they hated eche other in the proſperitee of this lif? For truſte wel, hir fleſhly love was dedly hate. As ſaith the Prophet David: who ſo that loveth wickedneſſe, he hateth his owen ſoule, and who ſo hateth his owen ſoule, certes he may love non other wight in no manere: and therfore in helle is no ſolace

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ne no frendſhip, but ever the more kinredes that ben in helle, the more curſing, the more chiding, and the more dedly hate ther is among hem. And further over ther they ſhul have defaute of all maner delites, for certes delites ben after the appetites of the five wittes; as ſight, hering, ſmelling, ſavouring, and touching. But in helle hir ſight ſhal be ful of derkeneſſe and of ſmoke, and hir eyen ful of teres; and hir hering ful of waimenting and grinting of teeth, as ſayth Jeſu Criſt: hir noſethirles ſhul be ful of ſtinking; and, as ſaith Eſay the Prophet, hir ſavouring ſhal be ful of bitter galle; and touching of all hir body, ſhal be covered with fire that never ſhal quenche, and with wormes that never ſhal die, as God ſayth by the mouth of Eſay. And for as moche as they ſhul not wene that they mow dien for peine, and by deth flee fro peine, that mow they underſtonde in the word of Job, that ſayth; Ther is the ſhadow of deth. Certes a ſhadowe hath likeneſſe of the thing of which it is ſhadowed, but ſhadowe is not the ſame thing of which it is ſhadowed: right ſo fareth the peine of helle; it is like deth, for the horrible anguiſh; and why? for it peineth hem ever as though they ſhuld die anon; but

but certes they ſhul not dien. For as ſayth Seint Gregory; To wretched caitifes ſhal be deth withouten deth, and ende withouten ende, and defaute withouten failing; for hir deth ſhal alway live, and hir ende ſhal ever more beginne, and hir defaute ſhal never faile. And therfore ſayth Seint John the Evangeliſt; They ſhul folow deth, and they ſhul not finde him, and they ſhul deſire to die, and deth ſhal flee from hem. And eke Job ſaith, that in helle is non ordre of rule. And al be it ſo, that God hath create all thing in right ordre, and nothing withouten ordre, but all thinges ben ordred and nombred, yet natheles they that ben dampned ben nothing in ordre, ne hold non ordre. For the erth ſhal bere hem no fruite; (for, as the Prophet David ſayeth, God ſhal deſtroy the fruite of the erth, as fro hem) ne water ſhal yeve hem no moiſture, ne the aire no refreſhing, ne the fire no light. For as ſayth Seint Baſil; The brenning of the fire of this world ſhal God yeve in helle to hem that ben dampned, but the light and the clereneſſe ſhal be yeve in heven to his children; right as the good man yeveth fleſh to his children, and bones to his houndes. And for they ſhul have non hope to eſcape, ſayth Job at laſt,

laſt, that ther ſhal horrour and griſly drede dwellen withouten ende. Horrour is alway drede of harme that is to come, and this drede ſhal alway dwell in the hertes of hem that ben dampned. And therfore han they lorne all hir hope for ſeven cauſes. Firſt, for God that is hir juge ſhal be withouten mercie to hem; and they may not pleſe him; ne non of his halwes; ne they may yeve nothing for hir raunſom; ne they have no vois to ſpeke to him; ne they may not flee fro peine; ne they have no goodneſſe in hem that they may ſhew to deliver hem fro peine. And therfore ſayth Salomon; The wicked man dieth, and whan he is ded, he ſhal have non hope to eſcape fro peine. Who ſo than wold wel underſtonde theſe peines, and bethinke him wel that he hath deſerved theſe peines for his ſinnes, certes he ſhulde have more talent to ſighen and to wepe, than for to ſinge and playe. For as ſayth Salomon; Who ſo that had the ſcience to know the peines that ben eſtabliſhed and ordeined for ſinne, he wold forſake ſinne. That ſcience, ſaith Seint Auſtin, maketh a man to waimenten in his herte.

The fourthe point, that oughte make a man have contrition, is the ſorweful remembrance of the

the good dedes that he hath lefte to don here in erthe, and alſo the good that he hath lorne. Sothly the good werkes that he hath lefte, either they be the good werkes that he wrought er he fell into dedly ſinne, or elles the good werkes that he wrought while he lay in ſinne. Sothly the good werkes that he did before that he fell in dedly ſinne, ben all mortified, aſtoned, and dulled by the eft ſinning: the other werkes that he wrought while he lay in ſinne, they ben utterly ded, as to the lif perdurable in heven. Than thilke good werkes that ben mortified by eft ſinning, which he did while he was in charitee, moun never quicken ayen without veray penitence. And therof ſayth God by the mouth of Ezechiel; if the rightful man retorne again fro his rightwiſneſſe and do wickedneſſe, ſhal he liven? nay; for all the good werkes that he hath wrought, ſhul never be in remembrance, for he ſhal die in his ſinne. And upon thilke chapitre ſayth Seint Gregorie thus; that we ſhal underſtonde this principally, that when we don dedly ſinne, it is for nought than to remembre or drawe into memorie the good werkes that we have wrought beforn: for certes in the werking of dedly ſinne,

ther

ther is no truſt in no good werk that we have don beforn; that is to ſay, as for to have therby the lif perdurable in heven. But natheles, the good werkes quicken again and comen again, and helpe and availe to have the lif perdurable in heven, whan we have contrition: but ſothly the good werkes that men don while they ben in dedly ſinne, for as moche as they were don in dedly ſinne, they may never quicken: for certes, thing that never had lif, may never quicken: and natheles, al be it ſo that they availen not to have the lif perdurable, yet availen they to abreggen the peine of helle, or elles to get temporal richeſſes, or elles that God wol the rather enlumine or light the herte of the ſinful man to have repentance; and eke they availen for to uſen a man to do good werkes, that the fende have the leſſe power of his ſoule. And thus the curteis Lord Jeſu Criſt ne woll that no good werk that men don be loſte, for in ſomwhat it ſhal availe. But for as moche as the good werkes that men don while they ben in good lif, ben all amortiſed by ſinne folowing, and eke ſith all the good werkes that men don while they ben in dedly ſinne, ben utterly ded, as for to have the lif perdu-

perdurable, wel may that man, that no good werk ne doth, ſing thilke newe Frenſhe ſong, *J'ay tout perdu mon temps, et mon labour.* For certes ſinne bereveth a man both goodneſſe of nature, and eke the goodneſſe of grace. For ſothly the grace of the holy goſt fareth like fire that may not ben idle; for fire faileth anon as it forletteth his werking, and right ſo grace faileth anon as it forletteth his werking. Than leſeth the ſinful man the goodneſſe of glorie, that only is hight to good men that labouren and werken wel. Wel may he be ſory than, that oweth all his lif to God, as long as he hath lived, and alſo as long as he ſhal live, that no goodneſſe ne hath to paie with his dette to God, to whom he oweth all his lif: for truſt wel he ſhal yeve accomptes, as ſayth Seint Bernard, of all the goodes that han ben yeven him in this preſent lif, and how he hath hem diſpended, in ſo moche that ther ſhal not periſhe an here of his hed, ne a moment of an houre ne ſhal not periſhe of his time, that he ne ſhal yeve therof a rekening.

The fifthe thing, that ought to meve a man to contrition, is remembrance of the paſſion that our Lord Jeſu Criſt ſuffered for our ſinnes. For as

ſayth Seint Bernard, While that I live, I ſhal have remembrance of the travailes that our Lord Jeſu Criſt ſuffered in preching, his werineſſe in traveling, his temptations whan he faſted, his long wakinges whan he prayed, his teres whan he wept for pitee of good peple: the wo and the ſhame, and the filthe that men ſayden to him: of the foule ſpitting that men ſpitten in his face, of the buffettes that men yave him: of the foule mouthes and of the foule repreves that men ſaiden to him: of the nayles with which he was nailed to the croſſe; and of all the remenant of his paſſion, that he ſuffred for mannes ſinne, and nothing for his gilte. And here ye ſhul underſtand that in mannes ſinne is every maner order, or ordinance, tourned up ſo doun. For it is ſoth, that God and reſon, and ſenſualitee, and the body of man, ben ordained, that everich of thiſe foure thinges ſhuld have lordſhip over that other: as thus; God ſhuld have lordſhip over reſon, and reſon over ſenſualitee, and ſenſualitee over the body of man. But ſothly whan man ſinneth, all this ordre, or ordinance, is turned up ſo doun; and therfore than, for as moche as reſon of manne wol not be ſubget ne obeiſant to God, that is his lord by right, therfore leſeth it the

Lordſhip

lordſhip that it ſhuld have over ſenſualitee, and eke over the body of man; and why? for ſenſualitee rebelleth than ayenſt reſon: and by that way leſeth reſon the lordſhip over ſenſualitee, and over the body. For right as reſon is rebel to God, right ſo is ſenſualitee rebel to reſon, and the body alſo. And certes this diſordinance, and this rebellion, our Lord Jeſu Criſt abought upon his precious body ful dere: and herkeneth in whiche wiſe. For as moche as reſon is rebel to God, therfore is man worthy to have ſorwe, and to be ded. This ſuffred our Lord Jeſu Criſt for man, after that he had be betraied of his diſciple, and diſtreined and bounde, ſo that his blood braſt out at every nail of his hondes, as ſaith Seint Auguſtin. And ferthermore, for as moche as reſon of man wol not daunt ſenſualitee whan it may, therfore is man worthy to have ſhame: and this ſuffered our Lord Jeſu Criſt for man, whan they ſpitten in his viſage. And fertherover, for as moche as the caitif body of man is rebel both to reſon and to ſenſualitee, therfore it is worthy the deth: and this ſuffered our Lord Jeſu Criſt upon the croſſe, wheras ther was no part of his body free, without grete peine and bitter paſſion. And all this ſuffred our Lord

Jeſu Criſt that never forfaited; aud thus ſayd he: To mochel am I peined, for thinges that I never deſerved: and to moche defouled for ſhendſhip that man is worthy to have. And therfore may the ſinful man wel ſay, as ſayth Seint Bernard: Accurſed be the bitterneſſe of my ſinne, for whiche ther muſt be ſuffered ſo moche bitterneſſe. For certes, after the divers diſcordance of our wickedneſſe was the paſſion of Jeſu Criſt ordeined in divers thinges; as thus. Certes ſinful mannes ſoule is betraied of the divel, by coveitiſe of temporel proſperitee; and ſcorned by diſceite, whan he cheſeth fleſhly delites; and yet it is turmented by impatience of adverſitee, and beſpet by ſervage and ſubjection of ſinne; and at the laſt it is ſlain finally. For this diſcordance of ſinful man, was Jeſu Criſt firſt betraied; and after that was he bounde, that came for to unbinde us of ſinne and of peine. Than was he beſcorned, that only ſhuld have ben honoured in alle thinges and of alle thinges. Than was his viſage, that ought to be deſired to be ſeen of all mankind (in which viſage angels deſiren to loke) vilainſly beſpet. Than was he ſcourged that nothing had treſpaſſed; and finally, than was he crucified and ſlain. Than were accom-

pliſhed

pliſhed the wordes of Eſaie: He was wounded for our miſdedes, and defouled for our felonies. Now ſith that Jeſu Criſt toke on himſelf the peine of all our wickedneſſes, moche ought ſinful man to wepe and to bewaile, that for his ſinnes Goddes ſone of heven ſhuld all this peine endure.

The ſixte thing, that ſhuld move a man to contrition, is the hope of three thinges, that is to ſay, foryeveneſſe of ſinne, and the yeſt of grace for to do wel, and the glorie of heven, with whiche God ſhal guerdon man for his good dedes. And for as moche as Jeſu Criſt yeveth us thiſe yeſtes of his largeneſſe, and of his ſoveraine bountee, therfore is he cleped, *Jeſus Nazarenus Rex Judæorum*. Jeſus is for to ſay, ſaviour or ſalvation, on whom men ſhul hopen to have foryeveneſſe of ſinnes, which that is proprely ſalvation of ſinnes. And therfore ſayd the Angel to Joſeph, Thou ſhalt clepe his name Jeſus, that ſhal ſaven his peple of hir ſinnes. And hereof ſaith Seint Peter; Ther is non other name under heven, that is yeven to any man, by which a man may be ſaved, but only Jeſus. Nazarenus is as moche for to ſay, as flouriſhing, in which a man ſhal hope, that he, that yeveth him remiſſion of ſinnes, ſhal yeve him alſo grace wel for to do: for

in the flour is hope of fruit in time coming, and in foryeveneſſe of ſinnes hope of grace wel to do. I was at the dore of thin herte, ſayth Jeſus, and cleped for to enter. He that openeth to me, ſhal have foryeveneſſe of his ſinnes, and I wol enter into him by my grace, and ſoupe with him by the good werkes that he ſhal don, which werkes ben the food of God, and he ſhal ſoupe with me by the gret joye that I ſhal yeve him. Thus ſhal man hope, that for his werkes of penance God ſhal yeve him his regne, as he behight him in the Goſpel.

Now ſhal man underſtande, in which maner ſhal be his contrition. I ſay, that it ſhal be univerſal and total; this is to ſay, a man ſhal be veray repentant for all his ſinnes, that he hath don in delite of his thought, for delite is perilous. For ther ben two maner of conſentinges; that on of hem is cleped conſenting of affection, whan a man is meved to do ſinne, and than deliteth him longe for to thinke on that ſinne, and his reſon apperceiveth it wel, that it is ſinne ayenſt the lawe of God, and yet his reſon refraineth not his foule delite or talent, though he ſee wel apertly, that it is ayenſt the reverence of God; although his reſon conſent

ſent not to do that ſinne indede, yet ſayn ſom doctours, that ſwiche delite that dwelleth longe is ful perilous, al be it never ſo lite. And alſo a man ſhuld ſorow, namely for all that ever he hath deſired ayenſt the lawe of God, with parfite conſenting of his reſon, for therof is no doute, that it is dedly ſinne in conſenting: for certes ther is no dedly ſinne, but that it is firſt in mannes thought, and after that in his delite, and ſo forth into conſenting, and into dede. Wherfore I ſay, that many men ne repent hem never of ſwiche thoughtes and delites, ne never ſhriven hem of it, but only of the dede of gret ſinnes outward: wherfore I ſay, that ſwiche wicked delites ben ſubtil begilers of hem that ſhul be dampned. Moreover man ought to ſorwen for his wicked wordes, as wel as for his wicked dedes: for certes repentance of a ſinguler ſinne, and not repentant of all his other ſinnes; or elles repenting him of all his other ſinnes, and not of a ſinguler ſinne, may not availe. For certes God Almighty is all good; and therfore, either he foryeveth all, or elles right nought. And therfore ſayth Seint Auguſtin: I wote certainly, that God is enemy to every ſinner: and how than? he that obſerveth on ſinne, ſhal he

have foryeveneſſe of the remenant of his other ſinnes? Nay. And furtherover contrition ſhuld be wonder ſorweful and anguiſhous: and therfore yeveth him God plainly his mercie: and therfore whan my ſoule was anguiſhous, and ſorweful within me, than had I remembrance of God, that my praier might come to him. Furtherover contrition muſte be continuel, and that man have ſtedfaſt purpoſe to ſhrive him, and to amend him of his lif. For ſothly, while contrition laſteth, man may ever hope to have foryeveneſſe. And of this cometh hate of ſinne, that deſtroyeth ſinne bothe in himſelf, and eke in other folk at his power. For which ſayth David; they that love God, hate wickedneſſe: for to love God, is for to love that he loveth, and hate that he hateth.

The laſt thing that men ſhull underſtand in contrition is this, wherof availeth contrition. I ſay, that contrition ſomtime delivereth man fro ſinne: of which David ſaith; I ſay, (quod David) I purpoſed fermely to ſhrive me, and thou Lord releſedeſt my ſinne. And right ſo as contrition availeth not without ſad purpos of ſhrift and ſatisfaction, right ſo litel worth is ſhrift or ſatisfaction withouten contrition. And

moreover

moreover contrition deſtroyeth the priſon of helle, and maketh weke and feble all the ſtrengthes of the Devils, and reſtoreth the yeftes of the holy goſt, and of all good vertues, and it clenſeth the ſoule of ſinne, and delivereth it fro the peine of helle, and fro the compagnie of the Devil, and fro the ſervage of ſinne, and reſtoreth it to all goodes ſpirituel, and to the compagnie and communion of holy chirche. And furtherover it maketh him, that whilom was ſone of ire, to be the ſone of grace: and all theſe thinges ben preved by holy writ. And therfore he that wold ſet his entent to thiſe thinges, he were ful wiſe: for ſothly he ne ſhuld have than in all his lif corage to ſinne, but yeve his herte and body to the ſervice of Jeſu Criſt, and therof do him homage. For certes our Lord Jeſu Criſt hath ſpared us ſo benignely in our folies, that if he ne had pitee on mannes ſoule, a ſory ſong might we alle ſinge.

Explicit prima pars penitentiæ; et incipit pars ſecunda.

The ſecond part of penitence is confeſſion, and that is ſigne of contrition. Now ſhul ye underſtonde what is confeſſion; and whether it ought

ought nedes to be don or non: and which thinges ben covenable to veray confeſſion.

Firſt ſhalt thou underſtande, that confeſſion is veray ſhewing of ſinnes to the preeſt; this is to ſaie veray, for he muſt confeſſe him of all the conditions that belongen to his ſinne, as ferforth as he can: all muſt be ſayd, and nothing excuſed, ne hid, ne forwrapped: and not avaunt him of his good werkes. Alſo it is neceſſarie to underſtande whennes that ſinnes ſpringen, and how they encreſen, and which they ben.

Of ſpringing of ſinnes ſaith Seint Poule in this wiſe: that right as by on man ſinne entred firſt into this world, and thurgh ſinne deth, right ſo deth entreth into alle men that ſinnen; and this man was Adam, by whom ſinne entred into this world, whan he brake the commandement of God. And therfore he that firſt was ſo mighty, that he ne ſhuld have died, became ſwiche on that he muſt nedes die, whether he wold or no; and all his progenie in this world, that in thilke maner ſinnen, dien. Loke that in the eſtate of innocence, whan Adam and Eve weren naked in paradiſe, and no thing ne hadden ſhame of hir nakedneſſe, how that the ſerpent, that was moſt wily of all other beſtes that God

God had made, ſayd to the woman: why commanded God you, that ye ſhuld not ete of every tree in Paradiſe? The woman anſwered: of the fruit, ſayd ſhe, of the trees of Paradiſe we feden us, but of the fruit of the tree that is in the middel of Paradiſe God forbode us for to eten, ne to touche it, leſt we ſhuld die. The ſerpent ſayd to the woman: nay, nay, ye ſhul not dien of deth; for ſoth God wote, that what day that ye ete therof your eyen ſhul open, and ye ſhul be as goddes, knowing good and harme. The woman ſaw that the tree was good to feding, and faire to the eyen, and delectable to the ſight; ſhe toke of the fruit of the tree and did ete, and yave to hire huſbond, and he ete; and anon the eyen of hem both opened: and whan they knewe that they were naked, they ſowed of a fig-tree leves in maner of breches, to hiden hir members. Here mow ye ſeen, that dedly ſinne hath firſt ſuggeſtion of the fende, as ſheweth here by the adder; and afterward the delit of the fleſh, as ſheweth here by Eve; and after that the conſenting of reſon, as ſheweth by Adam. For truſt wel, though ſo it were, that the fende tempted Eve, that is to ſay, the fleſh, and the fleſh had delit in the beautee

beautee of the fruit defended, yet certes til that reſon, that is to ſay, Adam, conſented to the eting of the fruit, yet ſtode he in the ſtate of innocence. Of thilke Adam toke we thilke ſinne original; from him fleſhly diſcended be we all, and engendred of vile and corrupt mater: and whan the ſoule is put in our bodies, right anon is contract original ſinne; and that, that was erſt but only peine of concupiſcence, is afterward both peine and ſinne: and therfore we ben all yborne ſones of wrath, and of dampnation perdurable, if ne were Baptiſme that we receive, which benimeth us the culpe: but forſoth the peine dwelleth with us as to temptation, which peine hight concupiſcence. This concupiſcence, whan it is wrongfully diſpoſed or ordeined in man, it maketh him coveit, by coveitiſe of fleſh, fleſhly ſinne by ſight of his eyen, as to erthly thinges, and alſo coveitiſe of highneſſe by pride of herte.

Now as to ſpeke of the firſt coveitiſe, that is concupiſcence, after the lawe of our membres, that were lawfully ymaked, and by rightful jugement of God, I ſay, for as moche as a man is not obeiſant to God, that is his Lord, therfore is his herte to him diſobeiſant thurgh concupiſcence, which is called nouriſhing of ſinne,

and

and occaſion of ſinne. Therfore, all the while that a man hath within him the peine of concupiſcence, it is impoſſible, but he be tempted ſomtime, and moved in his fleſh to ſinne. And this thing may not faile, as long as he liveth. It may wel waxe feble by vertue of Baptiſme, and by the grace of God thurgh penitence; but fully ne ſhal it never quenche, that he ne ſhal ſomtime be meved in himſelfe, but if he were refreined by ſikeneſſe, or malefice of ſorcerie, or cold drinkes. For lo, what ſayth Seint Poule: the fleſh coveiteth ayenſt the ſpirit, and the ſpirit ayenſt the fleſh: they ben ſo contrarie and ſo ſtriven, that a man may not alway do as he wold. The ſame Seint Poule, after his gret penance, in water and in lond; in water by night and by day, in gret peril, and in gret peine; in lond, in grete famine and thurſt, cold and clothles, and ones ſtoned almoſt to deth; yet ſayd he, alas! I caitif man, who ſhal deliver me fro the priſon of my caitif body? And Seint Jerom, whan he long time had dwelled in deſert, wheras he had no compagnie but of wilde beſtes; wher as he had no mete but herbes, and water to his drinke, ne no bed but the naked erth, wherfore his fleſh was black, as an Ethiopian, for hete, and

and nie deſtroyed for cold: yet ſayd he, that the brenning of lecherie boiled in all his body. Wherfore I wot wel ſikerly that they be deceived that ſay, they be not tempted in hir bodies. Witneſſe Seint James that ſaid, that every wight is tempted in his owen conſcience; that is to ſay, that eche of us hath mater and occaſion to be tempted of the noriſhing of ſinne, that is in his body. And therfore ſayth Seint John the Evangeliſt: if we ſay that we ben without ſinne, we deceive ourſelf, and truth is not in us.

Now ſhul ye underſtonde, in what maner ſinne wexeth and encreſeth in man. The firſt thing is that nouriſhing of ſinne, of which I ſpake before, that is concupiſcence: and after that cometh ſuggeſtion of the divel, this is to ſay, the divels belous, with which he bloweth in man the fire of concupiſcence: and after that a man bethinketh him, whether he wol do or no that thing to which he is tempted. And than if a man withſtond and weive the firſt entiſing of his fleſh, and of the fend, than it is no ſinne: and if ſo be he do not, than feleth he anon a flame of delit, and than it is good to beware and kepe him wel, or elles he wol fall anon to conſenting of ſinne, and than wol he do it, if he may have

time.

time and place. And of this mater ſayth Moyſes by the devil, in this maner: the fend ſayth, I wol chace and purſue man by wicked ſuggeſtion, and I wol hent him by meving and ſtirring of ſinne, and I wol depart my pris, or my prey, by deliberation, and my luſt ſhal be accompliſed in delit; I wol draw my ſwerd in conſenting: (for certes, right as a ſwerd departeth a thing in two peces, right ſo conſenting departeth God fro man) and than wol I ſlé him with my hond in dede of ſinne. Thus ſayth the fend; for certes, than is a man al ded in ſoule; and thus is ſinne accompliſed, by temptation, by delit, and by conſenting: and than is the ſinne actuel.

Forſoth ſinne is in two maners, either it is venial, or dedly ſinne. Sothly, whan a man loveth any creature more than Jeſu Criſt our creatour, than it is dedly ſinne: and venial ſinne it is, if a man love Jeſu Criſt leſſe than him ought. Forſoth the dede of this venial ſinne is ful perilous, for it amenuſeth the love that man ſhuld have to God, more and more. And therfore if a man charge himſelf with many ſwiche venial ſinnes, certes, but if ſo be that he ſomtime diſcharge him of hem by ſhrift, they may wel lightly amenuſe in him all the love that he hath

hath to Jeſu Criſt: and in this wiſe ſkippeth venial ſinne into dedly ſinne. For certes, the more that a man chargeth his ſoule with venial ſinnes, the more he is enclined to fall into dedly ſinne. And therfore let us not be negligent to diſcharge us of venial ſinnes. For the proverbe ſayth, that many ſmal maken a gret. And herken this enſample: A gret wawe of the ſee cometh ſomtime with ſo gret a violence, that it drencheth the ſhip: and the ſame harme do ſomtime the ſmal dropes of water, that enteren thurgh a litel crevis in the thurrok, and in the botom of the ſhip, if men ben ſo negligent, that they diſcharge hem not by time. And therfore although ther be difference betwix thiſe two cauſes of drenching, algates the ſhip is dreint. Right ſo fareth it ſomtime of dedly ſinne, and of anoious venial ſinnes, whan they multiplie in man ſo gretly, that thilke worldly thinges that he loveth, thurgh which he ſinneth venially, is as gret in his herte as the love of God, or more: and therfore the love of every thing that is not beſet in God, ne don principally for Goddes ſake, although that a man love it leſſe than God, yet is it venial ſinne; and dedly ſinne is, whan the love of any thing weigheth in the herte

herte of man, as moche as the love of God, or more. Dedly ſinne, as ſayth Seint Auguſtine, is, whan a man tourneth his herte fro God, whiche that is veray ſoveraine bountee, that may not chaunge, and yeveth his herte to thing that may chaunge and flitte: and certes, that is every thing ſave God of heven. For ſoth is, that if a man yeve his love, which that he oweth to God with all his herte, unto a creature, certes, as moche of his love as he yeveth to the ſame creature, ſo moche he bereveth fro God, and therfore doth he ſinne: for he, that is dettour to God, ne yeldeth not to God all his dette, that is to ſayn, all the love of his herte.

Now ſith man underſtondeth generally, which is venial ſinne, than is it covenable to tell ſpecially of ſinnes, whiche that many a man peraventure demeth hem no ſinnes, and ſhriveth him not of the ſame, and yet natheles they be ſinnes ſothly, as thiſe clerkes writen; this is to ſay, at every tyme that man eteth and drinketh more than ſufficeth to the ſuſtenance of his body, in certain he doth ſinne; eke whan he ſpeketh more than it nedeth, he doth ſinne; eke whan he herkeneth not benignely the com-

plaint of the poure; eke whan he is in hele of body, and wol not faſt whan other folk faſt, without cauſe reſonable; eke whan he ſlepeth more than nedeth, or whan he cometh by that encheſon to late to chirche, or to other werkes of charitee; eke whan he uſeth his wif withouten ſoveraine deſire of engendrure, to the honour of God, or for the entent to yeld his wif his dette of his body; eke whan he wol not viſite the ſike, or the priſoner, if he may; eke if he love wif or child, or other worldly thing, more than reſon requireth; eke if he flater or blandiſe more than him ought for any neceſſitee; eke if he amenuſe or withdrawe the almeſſe of the poure; eke if he apparaile his mete more deliciouſly than nede is, or ete it to haſtily by likerouſneſſe; eke if he talke vanitees in the chirche, or at Goddes ſervice, or that he be a taler of idle wordes of foly or vilanie, for he ſhal yeld accomptes of it at the day of dome; eke whan he behighteth or aſſureth to don thinges that he may not perfourme; eke whan that he by lightneſſe of foly miſſayeth or ſcorneth his neighbour; eke whan he hath ony wicked ſuſpecion of thing, ther he ne wote of it no ſothfaſtneſſe: thiſe

thinges

thinges and mo withouten nombre be ſinnes, as ſayth Seint Auguſtine. Now ſhul ye underſtonde, that al be it ſo that non erthly man may eſchewe al venial ſinnes, yet may he refreine him, by the brenning love that he hath to our Lord Jeſu Criſt, and by prayer and confeſſion, and other good werkes, ſo that it ſhal but litel grieve. For as ſayth Seint Auguſtine; if a man love God in ſwiche maner, that all that ever he doth is in the love of God, or for the love of God verily, for he brenneth in the love of God, loke how moche that o drope of water, which falleth into a fourneis ful of fire, anoieth or greveth the brenning of the fire, in like maner anoieth or greveth a venial ſinne unto that man, whiche is ſtedfaſt and parfite in the love of our Saviour Jeſu Criſt. Furthermore, men may alſo refreine and put away venial ſinne, by receiving worthily the precious body of Jeſu Criſt; by receiving eke of holy water; by almes dede; by general confeſſion of *Confiteor* at Maſſe, and at prime, and at complin, and by bleſſing of Biſhoppes and Preeſtes, and by other good werkes.

De ſeptem peccatis mortalibus.

Now it is behovely to tellen whiche ben

dedly ſinnes, that is to ſay, chiefetaines of ſinnes; for as moche as all they ren in o lees, but in divers maners. Now ben they cleped chiefetaines, for as moche as they be chiefe, and of hem ſpringen all other ſinnes. The rote of thiſe ſinnes than is pride, the general rote of all harmes. For of this rote ſpringen certain braunches: as ire, envie, accidie or ſlouthe, avarice or coveitiſe, (to commun underſtonding) glotonie, and lecherie: and eche of thiſe chief ſinnes hath his braunches and his twigges, as ſhal be declared in hir chapitres folowing.

De ſuperbia.

And though ſo be, that no man knoweth utterly the nombre of the twigges, and of the harmes that comen of pride, yet wol I ſhew a partie of hem, as ye ſhul underſtond. Ther is inobedience, avaunting, ipocriſie, deſpit, arrogance, impudence, ſwelling of herte, inſolence, elation, impatience, ſtrif, contumacie, preſumption, irreverence, pertinacie, vaine glorie, and many other twigges that I cannot declare. Inobedient is he that diſobeyeth for deſpit to the commandements of God, and to his ſoveraines, and to his goſtly fader. Avauntour, is he that boſteth

boſteth of the harme or of the bountee that he hath don. Ipocrite, is he that hideth to ſhew him ſwiche as he is, and ſheweth him to ſeme ſwiche as he is not. Deſpitous, is he that hath diſdain of his neighebour, that is to ſayn, of his even Criſten, or hath deſpit to do that him ought to do. Arrogant, is he that thinketh that he hath thoſe bountees in him, that he hath not, or weneth that he ſhulde have hem by his deſerving, or elles that demeth that he be that he is not. Impudent, is he that for his pride hath no ſhame of his ſinnes. Swelling of herte, is whan man rejoyceth him of harme that he hath don. Inſolent, is he that deſpiſeth in his jugement all other folk, as in regarde of his value, of his conning, of his ſpeking, and of his bering. Elation, is whan he ne may neither ſuffre to have maiſter ne felawe. Impatient, is he that wol not be taught, ne undernome of his vice, and by ſtrif werrieth truth wetingly, and defendeth his foly. *Contumax*, is he that thurgh his indignation is ayenſt every auctoritee or power of hem that ben his ſoveraines. Preſumption, is whan a man undertaketh an empriſe that him ought not to do, or elles that he may not do, and this is called ſurquidrie. Irrever-

ence, is whan man doth not honour ther as him ought to do, and waiteth to be reverenced. Pertinacie, is whan man defendeth his foly, and truſteth to moche in his owen wit. Vaineglorie, is for to have pompe, and delit in his temporel highneſſe, and glorye him in his worldly eſtate. Jangling, is whan man ſpeketh to moche before folk, and clappeth as a mille, and taketh no kepe what he ſayth.

And yet ther is a privee ſpice of pride, that waiteth firſt to be ſalewed, or he wol ſalew, all be he leſſe worthy than that other is; and eke he waiteth to ſit, or to go above him in the way, or kiſſe the pax, or ben encenſed, or gon to offring before his neighbour, and ſwiche ſemblable thinges, ayenſt his duetee peraventure, but that he hath his herte and his entente, in ſwiche a proude deſire, to be magnified and honoured beforn the peple.

Now ben ther two maner of prides; that on of hem is within the herte of a man, and that other is without. Of whiche ſothly thiſe foreſayd thinges, and mo than I have ſayd, apperteinen to pride, that is within the herte of man; and ther be other ſpices of pride that ben withouten: but natheles, that on of thiſe ſpices of

pride

pride is ſigne of that other, right as the gay leveſell at the Taverne is ſigne of the win that is in the celler. And this is in many thinges: as in ſpeche and contenance, and outragious array of clothing: for certes, if ther had ben no ſinne in clothing, Criſt wold not ſo ſone have noted and ſpoken of the clothing of thilke rich man in the goſpel. And, as Seint Gregory ſayth, that precious clothing is culpable for the derthe of it, and for his ſoftneſſe, and for his ſtrangeneſſe and diſguiſing, and for the ſuperfluitee, or for the inordinate ſcantneſſe of it, alas! may not a man ſee as in our daies, the ſinneful coſtlewe array of clothing, and namely in to moche ſuperfluitee, or elles in to diſordinate ſcantneſſe?

As to the firſte ſinne in ſuperfluitee of clothing, whiche that maketh it ſo dere, to the harme of the peple, not only the coſte of the enbrouding, the diſguiſing, endenting, or barring, ounding, paling, winding, or bending, and ſemblable waſt of cloth in vanitee; but ther is alſo the coſtlewe furring in hir gounes, ſo moche pounſoning of cheſel to maken holes, ſo moche dagging of ſheres, with the ſuperfluitee in length of the foreſaide gounes, trailing

in the dong and in the myre, on hors and eke on foot, as wel of man as of woman, that all thilke trailing is verayly (as in effect) wasted, consumed, thredbare, and rotten with dong, rather than it is yeven to the poure, to gret damage of the foresayd poure folk, and that in sondry wise: this is to sayn, the more that cloth is wasted, the more must it cost to the poure peple for the scarcenesse; and furtherover, if so be that they wolden yeve swiche pounsoned and dagged clothing to the poure peple, it is not convenient to were for hir estate, ne suffisant to bote hir necessitee, to kepe hem fro the distemperance of the firmament. Upon that other side, to speke of the horrible disordinat scantnesse of clothing, as ben thise cutted sloppes or hanselines, that thurgh hir shortenesse cover not the shameful membres of man, to wicked entente; alas! som of hem shewen the bosse and the shape of the horrible swollen membres, that semen like to the maladie of Hernia, in the wrapping of hir hosen, and eke the buttokkes of hem behinde, that faren as it were the hinder part of a she ape in the ful of the mone. And moreover the wretched swollen membres that they shew thurgh disguising, in departing

of

of hir hoſen in white and rede, ſemeth that half hir ſhameful privee membres were ſlaine. And if ſo be that they departe hir hoſen in other colours, as is white and blewe, or white and blake, or blake and rede, and ſo forth; than ſemeth it, as by variance of colour, that the half part of hir privee membres ben corrupt by the fire of Seint Anthonie, or by cancre, or other ſwiche miſchance. Of the hinder part of hir buttokkes it is ful horrible for to ſee, for certes in that partie of hir body ther as they purgen hir ſtinking ordure, that foule partie ſhewe they to the peple proudely in deſpite of honeſtee, whiche honeſtee that Jeſu Criſt and his frendes obſerved to ſhewe in hir lif. Now as to the outrageous array of women, God wote, that though the viſages of ſom of hem ſemen ful chaſte and debonaire, yet notifien they, in hir array of attire, likerouſneſſe and pride. I ſay not that honeſtee in clothing of man or woman is uncovenable, but certes the ſuperfluitee or diſordinat ſcarcitee of clothing is reprevable. Alſo the ſinne of ornament, or of apparaile, is in thinges that apperteine to riding, as in to many delicat hors, that ben holden for delit, that ben ſo faire, fatte, and coſtlewe;

and

and alſo in many a vicious knave, that is ſuſteined becauſe of hem; in curious harneis, as in ſadles, cropers, peitrels, and bridles, covered with precious cloth and rich, barred and plated of gold and of ſilver. For which God ſayth by Zacharie the Prophet, I wol confounde the riders of ſwiche hors. Theſe folke taken litel regard of the riding of Goddes ſone of heven, and of his harneis, whan he rode upon the aſſe, and had non other harneis but the poure clothes of his diſciples, ne we rede not that ever he rode on ony other beſte. I ſpeke this for the ſinne of ſuperfluitee, and not for honeſtee, whan reſon it requireth. And moreover, certes pride is gretly notified in holding of gret meinie, whan they ben of litel profite or of right no profite, and namely whan that meinie is felonous and damageous to the peple by hardineſſe of high lordeſhip, or by way of office; for certes, ſwiche lordes ſell than hir lordeſhip to the Devil of helle, whan they ſuſteine the wickedneſſe of hir meinie. Or elles, whan thiſe folk of low degree, as they that holden hoſtelries, ſuſteinen thefte of hir hoſtellers, and that is in many maner of deceites: thilke maner of folk ben the flies that folowen the hony, or elles the

houndes that folowen the caraine. Swiche foreſayde folk ſtranglen ſpirituelly hir lordeſhipes; for which thus ſaith David the Prophet; wicked deth mot come unto thilke lordeſhipes, and God yeve that they mot deſcend into helle, all doun; for in hir houſes is iniquitee and ſhrewedneſſe, and not God of heven. And certes, but if they don amendement, right as God yave his beniſon to Laban by the ſervice of Jacob, and to Pharao by the ſervice of Joſeph, right ſo God wol yeve his maliſon to ſwiche lordeſhipes as ſuſteine the wickedneſſe of hir ſervants, but they come to amendement. Pride of the table appereth eke ful oft; for certes riche men be cleped to feſtes, and poure folk be put away and rebuked; and alſo in exceſſe of divers metes and drinkes, and namely ſwiche maner bake metes and diſhe metes brenning of wilde fire, and peinted and caſtelled with paper, and ſemblable waſt, ſo that it is abuſion to thinke. And eke in to gret preciouſneſſe of veſſell, and curioſitee of minſtralcie, by which a man is ſtirred more to the delites of luxurie, if ſo be that he ſette his herte the leſſe upon poure Lord Jeſu Criſt, it is a ſinne; and certainely the delites might ben ſo gret in this cas

cas, that a man might lightly fall by hem into dedly ſinne. The ſpices that ſourden of pride, ſothly whan they ſourden of malice imagined, aviſed, and forecaſte, or elles of uſage, ben dedly ſinnes, it is no doute. And whan they ſourden by freeltee unaviſed ſodenly, and ſodenly withdraw again, al be they grevous ſinnes, I geſſe that they be not dedly. Now might men aſke, wherof that pride ſourdeth and ſpringeth. I ſay that ſomtime it ſpringeth of the goodes of nature, ſomtime of the goodes of fortune, and ſomtime of the goodes of grace. Certes the goodes of nature ſtonden only in the goodes of the body, or of the ſoule. Certes, the goodes of the body ben hele of body, ſtrength, deliverneſſe, beautee, gentrie, franchiſe; the goodes of nature of the ſoule ben good wit, ſharpe underſtonding, ſubtil engine, vertue naturel, good memorie: goodes of fortune ben riches, high degrees of lordſhipes, and preiſinges of the peple: goodes of grace ben ſcience, power to ſuffre ſpirituel travaile, benignitee, vertuous contemplation, withſtonding of temptation, and ſemblable thinges: of which foreſayd goodes, certes it is a gret folie, a man to priden him in ony of hem all. Now as for to ſpeke of goodes

of

of nature, God wote that ſomtime we have hem in nature as moche to our damage as to our profite. As for to ſpeke of hele of body, trewely it paſſeth ful lightly, and alſo it is ful ofte encheſon of ſikeneſſe of the ſoule: for God wote, the fleſh is a gret enemy to the ſoule: and therfore the more that the body is hole, the more be we in peril to falle. Eke for to priden him in his ſtrength of body, it is a grete folie: for certes the fleſh coveiteth ayenſt the ſpirite: and ever the more ſtrong that the fleſh is, the ſorier may the ſoule be: and over all, this ſtrength of body, and worldly hardineſſe, cauſeth ful oft to many man peril and miſchance. Alſo to have pride of gentrie is right gret folie: for oft time the gentrie of the body benimeth the gentrie of the ſoule: and alſo we ben all of o fader and of o moder: and all we ben of o nature rotten and corrupt, both riche and poure. Forſoth o maner gentrie is for to preiſe, that appareilleth mannes corage with vertues and moralitees, and maketh him Criſtes child; for truſteth wel, that over what man that ſinne hath maiſtrie, he is a veray cherl to ſinne.

Now ben ther general ſignes of gentilneſſe; as eſchewing of vice and ribaudrie, and ſervage

of ſinne, in word, and in werk and contenance, and uſing vertue, as courteſie, and cleneneſſe, and to be liberal; that is to ſay, large by meſure; for thilke that paſſeth meſure, is folie and ſinne. Another is to remember him of bountee, that he of other folk hath received. Another is to be benigne to his ſubgettes; wherfore ſaith Seneke; ther is nothing more covenable to a man of high eſtate, than debonairtee and pitee: and therfore thiſe flies that men clepen bees, whan they make hir king, they cheſen on that hath no pricke, wherwith he may ſting. Another is, man to have a noble herte and a diligent, to atteine to high vertuous thinges. Now certes, a man to priden him in the goodes of grace, is eke an outrageous folie: for thilke yeftes of grace that ſhuld have tourned him to goodneſſe, and to medicine, tourneth him to venime and confuſion, as ſayth Seint Gregorie. Certes alſo, who ſo prideth him in the goodneſſe of fortune, he is a gret fool: for ſomtime is a man a gret lord by the morwe, that is a caitife and a wretch or it be night: and ſomtime the richeſſe of a man is cauſe of his deth: and ſomtime the delites of a man ben cauſe of grevous maladie, thurgh which he dieth.

Certes,

Certes, the commendation of the peple is ful falſe and brotel for to truſt; this day they preiſe, to-morwe they blame. God wote, deſire to have commendation of the peple hath cauſed deth to many a beſy man.

Remedium Superbiæ.

Now ſith that ſo is, that ye have underſtond what is pride, and which be the ſpices of it, and how mennes pride fourdeth and ſpringeth; now ye ſhul underſtond which is the remedie ayenſt it. Humilitee or mekeneſſe is the remedy ayenſt pride; that is a vertue, thurgh which a man hath veray knowlege of himſelf, and holdeth of himſelf no deintee, ne no pris, as in regard of his deſertes, conſidering ever his freeltee. Now ben ther three maner of humilitees; as humilitee in herte, and another in the mouth, and the thridde in werkes. The humilitee in herte is in foure maners: that on is, whan a man holdeth himſelf as nought worth before God of heven: the ſecond is, whan he deſpiſeth non other man: the thridde is, whan he ne recketh nat though men holde him nought worth: and the fourth is, whan he is not ſory of

of his humiliation. Alſo the humilitee of mouth is in foure thinges; in attemperat ſpeche; in humilitee of ſpeche; and whan he confeſſeth with his owen mouth, that he is ſwiche as he thinketh that he is in his herte: another is, whan he preiſeth the bountee of another man and nothing therof amenuſeth. Humilitee eke in werkes is in foure maners. The firſt is, whan he putteth other men before him; the ſecond is, to cheſe the loweſt place of all; the thridde is, gladly to aſſent to good conſeil; the fourth is, to ſtond gladly to the award of his ſoveraine, or of him that is higher in degree: certain this is a gret werk of humilitee.

De Invidia.

After pride wol I ſpeke of the foule ſinne of Envie, which that is, after the word of the philoſopher, ſorwe of other mennes proſperitee; and after the word of Seint Auguſtine, it is ſorwe of other mennes wele, and joye of other mennes harme. This foule ſinne is platly ayenſt the holy goſt. Al be it ſo, that every ſinne is ayenſt the holy goſt, yet natheles, for as moche as bountee apperteineth proprely to the holy goſt, and envie cometh proprely of malice, therfore it

it is proprely ayenſt the bountee of the holy Goſt. Now hath malice two ſpices, that is to ſay, hardineſſe of herte in wickedneſſe, or elles the fleſh of man is ſo blind, that he conſidereth not that he is in ſinne, or recketh not that he is in ſinne; which is the hardineſſe of the divel. That other ſpice of envie is, whan that a man werrieth trouth, whan he wot that it is trouth, and alſo whan he werrieth the grace of God that god hath yeve to his neighbour: and all this is by envie. Certes than is envie the werſt ſinne that is; for ſothly all other ſinnes be ſomtime only ayenſt on ſpecial vertue: but certes envie is ayenſt al maner vertues and alle goodneſſe; for it is ſory of all bountee of his neighbour: and in this maner it is divers from all other ſinnes; for wel unnethe is ther any ſinne that it ne hath ſom delit in himſelf, ſave only envie, that ever hath in himſelf anguiſh and ſorwe. The ſpices of envie ben theſe. Ther is firſt ſorwe of other mennes goodneſſe and of hir proſperitee; and proſperitee ought to be kindly mater of joye; than is envie a ſinne ayenſt kinde. The ſeconde ſpice of envie is joye of other mennes harme; and that is proprely like to the divel, that ever rejoyſeth him of mannes harme. Of thiſe two

ſpices cometh backbiting; and this ſinne of backbiting or detracting hath certain ſpices, as thus: ſom man preiſeth his neighbour by a wicked entente, for he maketh alway a wicked knotte at the laſte ende: alway he maketh a *but* at the laſt ende, that is digne of more blame, than is worth all the preiſing. The ſecond ſpice is, that if a man be good, or doth or ſayth a thing to good entente, the backbiter wol turne all that goodneſſe up ſo doun to his ſhrewde entente. The thridde is to amenuſe the bountee of his neighbour. The fourthe ſpice of backbiting is this, that if men ſpeke goodneſſe of a man, than wol the backbiter ſay; Parfay ſwiche a man is yet better than he; in diſpreiſing of him that men preiſe. The fifth ſpice is this, for to conſent gladly to herken the harme that men ſpeke of other folk. This ſinne is ful gret, and ay encreſeth after the wicked entent of the backbiter. After backbiting cometh grutching or murmurance, and ſomtime it ſpringeth of impatience ayenſt God, and ſomtime ayenſt man. Ayenſt God it is whan a man grutcheth ayenſt the peine of helle, or ayenſt poverte, or loſſe of catel, or ayenſt rain or tempeſt, or elles grutcheth that ſhrewes have proſperitee, or elles that good men have adverſitee:

adverſitee: and all thiſe thinges ſhuld men ſuffre patiently, for they comen by the rightful jugement and ordinance of God. Somtime cometh grutching of avarice, as Judas grutched ayenſt the Magdeleine, whan ſhe anointed the hed of our Lord Jeſu Criſt with hire precious oynement. This maner murmuring is ſwiche as whan man grutcheth of goodneſſe that himſelf doth, or that other folk don of hir owen catel. Somtime cometh murmur of pride, as whan Simon the Phariſee grutched ayenſt the Magdeleine, whan ſhe approched to Jeſu Criſt and wept at his feet for hire ſinnes: and ſomtime it ſourdeth of envie, whan men diſcover a mannes harme that was privee, or bereth him on hond thing that is falſe. Murmur alſo is oft among ſervants, that grutchen whan hir ſoveraines bidden hem do leful thinges; and for as moche as they dare not openly withſay the commaundement of hir ſoveraines, yet wol they ſay harme and grutche and murmure prively for vetay deſpit; which wordes they call the divels *Pater noſter*, though ſo be that the divel had never *Pater noſter*, but that lewed folke yeven it ſwiche a name. Somtime it cometh of ire or privee hate, that noriſheth rancour in the herte, as afterward I ſhal declare.

clare. Than cometh eke bitterneſſe of herte, thurgh which bitterneſſe every good dede of his neighbour ſemeth to him bitter and unſavory. Than cometh diſcord that unbindeth all maner of frendſhip. Than cometh ſcorning of his neighbour, al do he never ſo wel. Than cometh accuſing, as whan a man ſeketh occaſion to annoyen his neighbour, which is like the craft of the divel, that waiteth both day and night to accuſen us all. Than cometh malignitee, thurgh which a man annoieth his neighbour prively if he may, and if he may not, algate his wicked will ſhal not let, as for to brenne his hous prively, or enpoiſon him, or ſle his beſtes, and ſemblable thinges.

Remedium Invidiæ.

Now wol I ſpeke of the remedie ayenſt this foule ſinne of envie. Firſte is the love of God principally, and loving of his neighbour as himſelf: for ſothly that on ne may not be without that other. And truſt wel, that in the name of thy neighbour thou ſhalt underſtande the name of thy brother; for certes all we have on fader fleſhly, and on moder; that is to ſay, Adam and Eve; and alſo on fader ſpirituel, that is to ſay, God

God of heven. Thy neighbour art thou bounde for to love, and will him all goodneſſe, and therfore ſayth God; Love thy neighbour as thyſelf; that is to ſay, to ſalvation both of lif and ſoule. And moreover thou ſhalt love him in word, and in benigne amoneſting and chaſtiſing, and comfort him in his anoyes, and praye for him with all thy herte. And in dede thou ſhalt love him in ſwiche wiſe that thou ſhalt do to him in charitee, as thou woldeſt that it were don to thin owen perſon: and therfore thou ne ſhalt do him no damage in wicked word, ne harme in his body, ne in his catel, ne in his ſoule by entiſing of wicked enſample. Thou ſhalt not deſire his wif, ne non of his thinges. Underſtonde eke that in the name of neighbour is comprehended his enemy: certes man ſhal love his enemy for the commandement of God, and ſothly thy frend thou ſhalt love in God. I ſay thin enemy ſhalt thou love for Goddes ſake, by his commandement: for if it were reſon that man ſhulde hate his enemy, forſoth God n'olde not receive us to his love that ben his enemies. Ayenſt three maner of wronges, that his enemy doth to him, he ſhal do three things, as thus: ayenſt hate and rancour of herte, he ſhal love him in herte:

ayenſt chiding and wicked wordes, he ſhal pray for his enemy: ayenſt the wicked dede of his enemy he ſhal do him bountee. For Criſt ſayth: Love your enemies, and prayeth for hem that ſpeke you harme, and for hem that chaſen and purſuen you: and do bountee to hem that haten you. Lo, thus comandeth us our Lord Jeſu Criſt to do to our enemies: forſoth nature driveth us to love our frendes, and parfay our enemies have more nede of love than our frendes, and they that more nede have, certes to hem ſhal men do goodneſſe. And certes in thilke dede have we remembrance of the love of Jeſu Criſt that died for his enemies: and in as moche as thilke love is more grevous to performe, ſo moche is more gret the merite, and therfore the loving of our enemy hath confounded the venime of the divel. For right as the divel is confounded by humilitee, right ſo is he wounded to the deth by the love of our enemy: certes than is love the medicine that caſteth out the venime of envie fro mannes herte.

De Ira.

AETER envy wol I declare of the ſinne of Ire: for ſothly who ſo hath envy upon his neighbour,

bour, anon communly wol finde him mater of wrath in word or in dede ayenſt him to whom he hath envie. And as wel cometh Ire of pride as of envie, for ſothly he that is proude or envious is lightly wroth.

This ſinne of Ire, after the diſcriving of Seint Auguſtin, is wicked will to be avenged by word or by dede. Ire, after the Philoſophre, is the fervent blode of man yquicked in his herte, thurgh which he wold harme to him that he hateth: for certes the herte of man by enchaufing and meving of his blood waxeth ſo troubled, that it is out of all maner jugement of reſon. But ye ſhul underſtonde that Ire is in two maners, that on of hem is good, and that other is wicked. The good ire is by jalouſie of goodneſſe, thurgh the which man is wroth with wickedneſſe, and again wickedneſſe. And therfore ſaith the wiſe man, that ire is better than play. This ire is with debonairtee, and it is wrothe without bitterneſſe: not wrothe ayenſt the man, but wrothe with the miſdede of the man; as ſaith the Prophet David; *Iraſcimini, & nolite peccare.* Now underſtond that wicked ire is in two maners, that is to ſay, ſoden ire or haſty ire without aviſement and conſenting of reſon; the mening

and the ſenſe of this is, that the reſon of a man ne conſenteth not to that ſoden ire, and than it is venial. Another ire is that is ful wicked, that cometh of felonie of herte, aviſed and caſt before, with wicked will to do vengeance, and therto his reſon conſenteth: and ſothly this is dedly ſinne. This ire is ſo diſpleſant to God, that it troubleth his hous, and chaſeth the holy Goſt out of mannes ſoule, and waſteth and deſtroyeth that likeneſſe of God, that is to ſay, the vertue that is in mannes ſoule, and putteth in him the likeneſſe of the devil, and benimeth the man fro God that is his rightful Lord. This ire is a ful gret pleſance to the devil, for it is the devils forneis that he enchaufeth with the fire of helle. For certes right ſo as fire is more mighty to deſtroie erthly thinges, than any other element, right ſo ire is mighty to deſtroie all ſpirituel thinges. Loke how that fire of ſmal gledes, that ben almoſt ded under aſhen, wol quicken ayen whan they ben touched with brimſtone, right ſo ire wol evermore quicken ayen, whan it is touched with pride that is covered in mannes herte. For certes fire ne may not come out of no thing, but if it were firſt in the ſame thing naturelly: as fire is drawne out of flintes with ſtele.

ſtele. And right ſo as pride is many times mater of ire, right ſo is rancour norice and keper of ire. Ther is a maner tree, as ſayth Seint Iſidore, that whan men make a fire of the ſaide tree, and cover the coles of it with aſhen, ſothly the fire therof wol laſt all a yere or more: and right ſo fareth it of rancour, whan it is ones conceived in the herte of ſom men, certes it wol laſten peraventure from on Eaſterne day until another Eaſterne day, or more. But certes the ſame man is ful fer from the mercie of God all thilke while.

In this foreſaid devils forneis ther forgen three ſhrewes; pride, that ay bloweth and encreſeth the fire by chiding and wicked wordes: than ſtondeth envie, and holdeth the hot yren upon the herte of man, with a pair of longe tonges of longe rancour: and than ſtondeth the ſinne of contumelie or ſtrif and cheſte, and battereth and forgeth by vilains reprevinges. Certes this curſed ſinne annoyeth both to the man himſelf, and eke his neighbour. For ſothly almoſt all the harme or damage that ony man doth to his neighbour cometh of wrath: for certes, outrageous wrathe doth all that ever the foule fende willeth or commandeth him; for he

he ne ſpareth neyther for our Lord Jeſu Criſt, ne his ſwete moder; and in his outrageous anger and ire, alas! alas! ful many on at that time, feleth in his herte ful wickedly, both of Criſt, and alſo of all his halwes. Is not this a curſed vice? Yes certes. Alas! it benimmeth fro man his witte and his reſon, and all his debonaire lif ſpirituel, that ſhuld kepe his ſoule. Certes it benimmeth alſo Goddes due lordſhip (and that is mannes ſoule) and the love of his neighbours: it ſtriveth alſo all day ayenſt trouth; it reveth him the quiet of his herte, and ſubverteth his ſoule.

Of ire comen thiſe ſtinking engendrures; firſt, hate, that is olde wrath: diſcord, thurgh which a man forſaketh his olde frend that he hath loved ful long: and than cometh werre, and every maner of wrong that a man doth to his neighbour in body or in catel. Of this curſed ſinne of ire cometh eke manſlaughter. And underſtondeth wel that homicide (that is, manſlaughter) is in divers wiſe. Som maner of homicide is ſpirituel, and ſom is bodily. Spirituel manſlaughter is in ſix thinges. Firſt, by hate, as ſayth Seint John: He that hateth his brother, is an homicide. Homicide is alſo by back-

backbiting; of which backbitours ſayth Salomon, that they have two ſwerdes, with which they ſlay hir neighbours: for ſothly as wicked it is to benime of him his good name as his lif. Homicide is alſo in yeving of wicked conſeil by fraude, as for to yeve conſeil to areiſe wrongful cuſtomes and talages; of which ſayth Salomon: A lion roring, and a bere hungrie, ben like to cruel Lordes, in withholding or abregging of the hire or of the wages of ſervantes, or elles in uſurie, or in withdrawing of the almeſſe of poure folk. For which the wiſe man ſayth: Fedeth him that almoſt dieth for honger; for ſothly but if thou fede him thou ſleeſt him. And all thiſe ben dedly ſinnes. Bodily manſlaughter is whan thou ſleeſt him with thy tonge in other maner, as whan thou commandeſt to ſle a man, or elles yeveſt conſeil to ſle a man. Manſlaughter in dede is in foure maners. That on is by lawe, right as a juſtice dampneth him that is culpable to the deth: but let the juſtice beware that he do it rightfully, and that he do it not for delit to ſpill blood, but for keping of rightwiſeneſſe. Another homicide is don for neceſſitee, as whan a man ſleeth another in his defence, and that he ne may non other wiſe eſcapen

eſcapen fro his owen deth: but certain, and he may eſcape withouten ſlaughter of his adverſarie, he doth ſinne, and he ſhal bere penance as for dedly ſinne. Alſo if a man by cas or aventure ſhete an arowe or caſt a ſtone, with which he ſleeth a man, he is an homicide. And if a woman by negligence overlyeth hire child in hire ſlepe, it is homicide and dedly ſinne. Alſo whan a man diſturbleth conception of a childe, and maketh a woman barein by drinkes of venimous herbes, thurgh which ſhe may not conceive, or ſleeth hire child by drinkes, or elles putteth certain material thing in hire ſecret place to ſle hire childe, or elles doth unkinde ſinne, by which man, or woman, ſhedeth his nature in place ther as a childe may not be conceived: or elles if a woman hath conceived, and hurteth hireſelf, and by that miſhappe the childe is ſlaine, yet is it homicide. What ſay we eke of women that murderen hir children for drede of worldly ſhame? Certes, it is an horrible homicide. Eke if a man approche to a woman by deſir of lecherie, thurgh which the childe is periſhed; or elles ſmiteth a woman wetingly, thurgh which ſhe leſeth hire child; all thiſe ben homicides, and horrible dedly ſinnes. Yet comen ther of

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ire many mo ſinnes, as wel in worde, as in thought and in dede; as he that arretteth upon God, or blameth God of the thing of which he is himſelf gilty; or deſpiſeth God and all his halwes, as don thiſe curſed haſardours in divers contrees. This curſed ſinne don they, whan they felen in hir herte ful wickedly of God and of his halwes: alſo whan they treten unreverently the ſacrament of the auter, thilke ſinne is ſo gret, that unneth it may be releſed, but that the mercy of God paſſeth all his werkes, it is ſo gret, and he ſo benigne. Than cometh alſo of ire attry anger, whan a man is ſharpely amoneſted in his ſhrift to leve his ſinne; than wol he be angry, and anſwere hokerly and angerly, to defend or excuſen his ſinne by unſtedfaſtneſſe of his fleſhe; or elles he did it for to hold compagnie with his felawes; or elles he ſayeth the fend enticed him; or elles he did it for his youthe; or elles his complexion is ſo corageous that he may not forbere; or elles it is his deſtinee, he ſayth, unto a certain age; or elles he ſayth it cometh him of gentilneſſe of his aunceſtres, and ſemblable thinges. All thiſe maner of folke ſo wrappen hem in hir ſinnes, that they ne wol not deliver hemſelf; for ſothly, no wight that excuſeth himſelf

himſelf wilfully of his ſinne, may not be deliuered of his ſinne, til that he mekely beknoweth his ſinne. After this than cometh ſwering, that is expreſſe ayenſt the commandement of God: and that befalleth often of anger and of ire. God ſayth; Thou ſhalt not take the name of thy Lord God in idel. Alſo our Lord Jeſu Criſt ſayth by the word of Seint Mathew; Ne ſhal ye not ſwere in all manere, neyther by heven, for it is Goddes trone: ne by erthe, for it is the benche of his feet: ne by Jeruſalem, for it is the citee of a gret King: ne by thin hed, for thou ne mayſt not make an here white ne black: but he ſayth, be your word, ye, ye, nay, nay: and what that is more, it is of evil. Thus ſayth Criſt. For Criſtes ſake ſwere not ſo ſinnefully, in diſmembring of Criſt, by ſoule, herte, bones, and body: for certes it ſemeth, that ye thinken that the curſed Jewes diſmembred him not ynough, but ye diſmembre him more. And if ſo be that the lawe compell you to ſwere, than reuleth you after the lawe of God in your ſwering, as ſayth Jeremie; Thou ſhalt kepe three conditions; thou ſhalt ſwere in trouth, in dome, and in rightwiſeneſſe. This is to ſay, thou ſhalt ſwere ſoth; for every leſing is ayenſt Criſt; for

Criſt

Criſt is veray trouth: and thinke wel this, that every gret ſwerer, not compelled lawfully to ſwere, the plage ſhal not depart fro his hous, while he uſeth unleful ſwering. Thou ſhalt ſwere alſo in dome, whan thou art conſtreined by the domeſman to witneſſe a trouth. Alſo thou ſhalt not ſwere for envie, neyther for favour, ne for mede, but only for rightwiſeneſſe, and for declaring of trouthe to the honour and worſhip of God, and to the aiding and helping of thin even Criſten. And therfore every man that taketh Goddes name in idel, or falſely ſwereth with his mouth, or elles taketh on him the name of Criſt, to be called a Criſten man, and liveth agenſt Criſtes living and his teching: all they take Goddes name in idel. Loke alſo what ſayth Seint Peter; *Actuum* iv. *Non eſt aliud nomen ſub cælo*, &c. Ther is non other name (ſayth Seint Peter) under heven yeven to men, in which they may be ſaved; that is to ſay, but the name of Jeſu Criſt. Take kepe eke how precious is the name of Jeſu Criſt, as ſayth Seint Poule, *ad Philipenſes* ii. *In nomine Jeſu*, &c. that in the name of Jeſu every knee of hevenly creature, or erthly, or of helle, ſhuld bowen: for it is ſo high and ſo worſhipful, that the curſed fend

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in helle ſhuld tremble for to here it named. Than ſemeth it, that men that ſwere ſo horribly by his bleſſed name, that they deſpiſe it more boldely than did the curſed Jewes, or elles the divel, that trembleth whan he hereth his name.

Now certes, ſith that ſwering (but if it be lawfully don) is ſo highly defended, moche worſe is for to ſwere falſely, and eke nedeles.

What ſay we eke of hem that deliten hem in ſwering, and hold it a genterie or manly dede to ſwere gret othes? And what of hem that of veray uſage ne ceſe not to ſwere gret othes, al be the cauſe not worth a ſtrawe? Certes this is horrible ſinne. Swering ſodenly without aviſement is alſo a gret ſinne. But let us go now to that horrible ſwering of adjuration and conjuration, as don thiſe falſe enchauntours and nigromancers in baſins ful of water, or in a bright ſwerd, in a cercle, or in a fire, or in a ſholder bone of a ſhepe: I cannot ſayn, but that they do curſedly and damnably ayenſt Criſt, and all the feith of holy chirche.

What ſay we of hem that beleven on divinales, as by flight or by noiſe of briddes or of beſtes, or by ſorte of geomancie, by dremes, by chirking of dores, or craking of houſes, by gnawing of rattes,

rattes, and ſwiche maner wretchedneſſe? Certes, all thiſe thinges ben defended by God and holy chirche, for which they ben accurſed, till they come to amendement, that on ſwiche filth ſet hir beleve. Charmes for woundes, or for maladies of men or of beſtes, if they take any effect, it may be peraventure that God ſuffreth it, for folk ſhuld yeve the more feith and reverence to his name.

Now wol I ſpeke of leſinges, which generally is falſe ſignifiance of word, in entent to deceive his even Criſten. Some leſing is, of which ther cometh non avantage to no wight; and ſom leſing turneth to the profite and eſe of a man, and to the dammage of another man. Another leſing is, for to ſaven his lif or his catel. Another leſing cometh of delit for to lie, in which delit, they wol forge a long tale, and peint it with all circumſtances, wher all the ground of the tale is falſe. Some leſing cometh, for he wol ſuſtein his word: and ſom leſing cometh of recchleſneſſe withouten aviſement, and ſemblable thinges.

Let us now touche the vice of flaterie, which ne cometh not gladly, but for drede, or for covetiſe. Flaterie is generally wrongful prei-

ſing. Flaterers ben the devils nourices, that nouriſh his children with milke of loſengerie. Forſoth Salomon ſayth, That flaterie is werſe than detraction: for ſomtime detraction maketh an hautein man be the more humble, for he dredeth detraction, but certes flaterie maketh a man to enhaunce his herte and his contenance. Flaterers ben the devils enchauntours, for they maken a man to wenen himſelf be like that he is not like. They be like to Judas, that betrayed God; and thiſe flaterers betrayen man to ſelle him to his enemy, that is the devil. Flaterers ben the devils chappeleines, that ever ſingen *Placebo*. I reken flaterie in the vices of ire: for oft time if a man be wroth with another, than wol he flater ſom wight, to ſuſteine him in his quarrel.

Speke we now of ſwiche curſing as cometh of irous herte. Maliſon generally may be ſaid every maner power of harme: ſwiche curſing bereveth man the regne of God, as ſayth Seint Poule. And oft time ſwiche curſing wrongfully retorneth again to him that curſeth, as a bird retorneth again to his owen neſt. And over all thing men ought eſchew to curſe hir children, and to yeve to the devil hir engendrure, as fer forth

forth as in hem is: certes it is a grete peril and a grete ſinne.

Let us than ſpeke of chiding and repreving, which ben ful grete woundes in mannes herte, for they unſow the ſeames of frendſhip in mannes herte: for certes, unnethe may a man be plainely accorded with him, that he hath openly reviled, repreved, and diſclaundred: this is a full griſly ſinne, as Criſt ſayth in the Goſpel. And take ye kepe now, that he that repreveth his neighbour, either he repreveth him by ſom harme of peine, that he hath upon his bodie, as, Meſel, croked harlot; or by ſom ſinne that he doth. Now if he repreve him by harme of peine, than turneth the repreve to Jeſu Criſt: for peine is ſent by the rightwiſe ſonde of God, and by his ſuffrance, be it meſelrie, or maime, or maladie: and if he repreve him uncharitably of ſinne, as, thou holour, thou dronkelewe harlot, and ſo forth; than apperteineth that to the rejoicing of the devil, which ever hath joye that men don ſinne. And certes, chiding may not come but out of a vilains herte, for after the haboundance of the herte ſpeketh the mouth ful oft. And ye ſhul underſtond, that loke by any way, whan ony man chaſtiſeth another, that he beware fro chid-

ing or repreving: for trewely, but he beware, he may ful lightly quicken the fire of anger and of wrath, which he ſhuld quench: and peraventure ſleth him, that he might chaſtiſe with benignitee. For, as ſayth Salomon, the amiable tonge is the tree of lif; that is to ſay, of lif ſpirituel. And ſothly, a diſſolute tonge ſleth the ſpirit of him that repreveth, and alſo of him which is repreved. Lo, what ſayth Seint Auguſtine: Ther is nothing ſo like the devils child, as he which oft chideth. A ſervant of God behoveth not to chide. And though that chiding be a vilains thing betwix all maner folk, yet it is certes moſt uncovenable betwene a man and his wif, for ther is never reſt. And therfore ſayth Salomon; An hous that is uncovered in rayn and dropping, and a chiding wif, ben like. A man, which is in a dropping hous in many places, though he eſchew the dropping in o place, it droppeth on him in another place: ſo fareth it by a chiding wif; if ſhe chide him not in o place, ſhe wol chide him in another: and therfore, better is a morſel of bred with joye, than an hous filled ful of delices with chiding, ſayth Salomon. And Seint Poule ſayth; O ye women, beth ye ſubgettes to your huſbonds, as you

you behoyeth in God; and ye men loveth your wives.

Afterward ſpeke we of ſcorning, which is a wicked ſinne, and namely, whan he ſcorneth a man for his good werkes: for certes, ſwiche ſcorners faren like the foule tode, that may not endure to ſmell the ſwete ſavour of the vine, whan it flouriſheth. Thiſe ſcorners ben parting felawes with the devil, for they have joye whan the devil winneth, and ſorwe if he leſeth. They ben adverſaries to Jeſu Criſt, for they hate that he loveth; that is to ſay, ſalvation of ſoule.

Speke we now of wicked conſeil, for he that wicked conſeil yeveth is a traitour, for he deceiveth him that truſteth in him. But natheles, yet is wicked conſeil firſt ayenſt himſelf: for, as ſayth the wiſe man, every falſe living hath this propertee in himſelf, that he that wol annoy another man, he annoyeth firſt himſelf. And men ſhul underſtond, that man ſhal not take his conſeil of falſe folk, ne of angry folk, or grevous folk, ne of folk that loven ſpecially hir owen profit, ne of to moche worldly folk, namely, in conſeiling of mannes ſoule.

Now cometh the ſinne of hem that maken diſcord among folk, which is a ſinne that Criſt

hateth utterly; and no wonder is; for he died for to make concord. And more ſhame don they to Criſt, than did they that him crucified; for God loveth better, that frendſhip be amonges folk, than he did his owen body, which that he yave for unitee. Therfore ben they likened to the devil, that ever is about to make diſcord.

Now cometh the ſinne of Double tonge, ſwiche as ſpeke faire before folk, and wickedly behind; or elles they make ſemblaunt as though they ſpake of good entention, or elles in game and play, and yet they ſpeken of wicked entente.

Now cometh bewreying of conſeil, thurgh which a man is defamed: certes unnethe may he reſtore the damage. Now cometh manace, that is an open folie: for he that oft manaceth, he threteth more than he may performe ful oft time. Now comen idel wordes, that be without profite of him that ſpeketh the wordes, and eke of him that herkeneth the wordes: or elles idel wordes ben tho that ben nedeles, or without entente of naturel profit. And al be it that idel wordes be ſomtime venial ſinne, yet ſhuld men doute hem, for we ſhul yeve rekening of hem before God. Now cometh jangling, that may not come withouten ſinne: and as ſayth Salomon,

mon, it is a ſigne of apert folie. And therfore a philoſophre ſayd, whan a man axed him how that he ſhuld pleſe the peple, he anſwered; Do many good werkes, and ſpeke few jangelinges. After this cometh the ſinne of japeres, that ben the devils apes, for they make folk to laugh at hir japerie, as folk don at the gaudes of an ape: ſwiche japes defendeth Seint Poule. Loke how that vertuous wordes and holy comforten hem that travaillen in the ſervice of Criſt, right ſo comforten the vilains words, and the knakkes of japeres, hem that travaillen in the ſervice of the devil. Thiſe ben the ſinnes of the tonge, that comen of ire, and other ſinnes many mo.

Remedium Iræ.

THE remedie ayenſt Ire, is a vertue that cleped is manſuetude, that is Debonairtee: and eke another vertue, that men clepen patience or ſufferaunce.

Debonairtee withdraweth and refreineth the ſtirrings and mevings of mannes corage in his herte, in ſwich maner, that they ne ſkip not out by anger ne ire. Sufferance ſuffereth ſwetely all the annoyance and the wrong that is don to man outward. Seint Jerome ſayth this of debonairtee,

That it doth no harme to no wight, ne ſayth; ne for no harme that men do ne ſay, he ne chafeth not ayenſt reſon. This vertue ſomtime cometh of nature; for, as ſayth the philoſophre, a man is a quick thing, by nature debonaire, and tretable to goodneſſe: but whan debonairtee is enformed of grace, than it is the more worth.

Patience is another remedy ayenſt ire, and is a vertue that ſuffereth ſwetely every mannes goodneſſe, and is not wroth for non harme that is don to him. The philoſophre ſayth, that patience is the vertue that ſuffreth debonairly al the outrage of adverſitee, and every wicked word. This vertue maketh a man like to God, and maketh him Goddes owen childe: as ſayth Criſt. This vertue diſcomfiteth thin enemies. And therfore ſayth the wiſe man; if thou wolt vanquiſh thin enemie, ſee thou be patient. And thou ſhalt underſtond, that a man ſuffereth foure maner of grevances in outward thinges, ayenſt the which foure he muſt have foure maner of patiences.

The firſt grevance is of wicked wordes. Thilke grevance ſuffred Jeſu Criſt, without grutching, ful patiently, whan the Jewes deſpiſed him and repreved him ful oft. Suffer thou therfore

fore patiently, for the wiſe man ſaith: if thou ſtrive with a foole, though the foole be wroth, or though he laugh, algate thou ſhalt have no reſte. That other grevance outward is to have domage of thy catel. Therayenſt ſuffred Criſt ful patiently, whan he was deſpoiled of al that he had in this lif, and that n'as but his clothes. The thridde grevance is a man to have harme in his body. That ſuffred Criſt ful patiently in all his paſſion. The fourthe grevance is in outrageous labour in werkes: wherfore I ſay, that folk that make hir ſervants to travaile to grevouſly, or out of time, as in holy dayes, ſothly they do gret ſinne. Hereayenſt ſuffred Criſt ful patiently, and taught us patience, whan he bare upon his bleſſed ſholders the croſſe, upon which he ſhuld ſuffer deſpitous deth. Here may men lerne to be patient; for certes, not only criſten men be patient for love of Jeſu Criſt, and for guerdon of the blisful lif that is perdurable, but certes the old Payenes, that never were criſtened, commendeden and uſeden the vertue of patience.

A philoſophre upon a time, that wold have beten his diſciple for his gret treſpas, for which he was gretly meved, and brought a yerde to bete

bete the childe, and whan this child ſawe the yerde, he ſayd to his maiſter: what thinke ye to do? I wol bete thee, ſayd the maiſter, for thy correction. Forſoth, ſayd the childe, ye ought firſt correct yourſelf, that have loſt all your patience for the offence of a child. Forſooth, ſayd the maiſter all weping, thou ſayeſt ſoth: have thou the yerde, my dere ſone, and correct me for min impatience. Of patience cometh obedience, thurgh which a man is obedient to Criſt, and to all hem to which he ought to be obedient in Criſt. And underſtand wel, that obedience is parfite, whan that a man doth gladly and haſtily, with good herte entirely, all that he ſhuld do. Obedience generally, is to performe haſtily the doctrine of God, and of his ſoveraines, to which him ought to be obeiſant in all rightwiſeneſſe.

De Accidia.

After the ſinne of wrath, now wol I ſpeke of the ſinne of accidie, or ſlouth: for envie blindeth the herte of a man, and ire troubleth a man, and accidie maketh him hevy, thoughtful, and wrawe. Envie and ire maken bitterneſſe in herte, which bitterneſſe is mother of accidie, and benimeth

benimeth him the love of alle goodneſſe; than is accidie the anguiſh of a trouble herte. And Seint Auguſtine ſayth: It is annoye of goodneſſe and annoye of harme. Certes this is a damnable ſinne, for it doth wrong to Jeſu Criſt, in as moche as it benimeth the ſervice that men ſhulde do to Criſt with alle diligence, as ſayth Salomon: but accidie doth non ſwiche diligence. He doth all thing with annoye, and with wrawneſſe, ſlakneſſe, and excuſation, with idelneſſe and unluſt. For which the book ſayth: Accurſed be he that doth the ſervice of God negligently. Than is accidie enemie to every eſtate of man. For certes the eſtate of man is in three maners: either it is the eſtate of innocence, as was the eſtate of Adam, before that he fell into ſinne, in which eſtate he was holden to werk, as in herying and adoring of God. Another eſtate is the eſtate of ſinful men: in which eſtate men ben holden to labour in praying to God, for amendement of hir ſinnes, and that he wold graunt hem to riſe out of hir ſinnes. Another eſtate is the eſtate of grace, in which eſtate he is holden to werkes of penitence: and certes, to all thiſe thinges is accidie enemie and contrary, for he loveth no beſineſſe at all. Now certes, this foule

ſinne

ſinne of accidie is eke a ful gret enemie to the livelode of the body; for it ne hath no purveaunce ayenſt temporel neceſſitee; for it forſleutheth, forſluggeth, and deſtroieth all goodes temporel by recchleſneſſe.

The fourth thing is that accidie is like hem that ben in the peine of helle, becauſe of hir ſlouthe and of hir hevineſſe: for they that be damned, ben ſo bound, that they may neyther do wel ne think wel. Of accidie cometh firſt, that a man is annoied and accombred to do any goodneſſe, and that maketh that God hath abhomination of ſwiche accidie, as ſayth Seint John.

Now cometh ſlouthe, that wol not ſuffre no hardneſſe ne no penance: for ſothly, ſlouthe is ſo tendre and ſo delicat, as ſayth Salomon, that he wol ſuffre non hardneſſe ne penance, and therfore he ſhendeth all that he doth. Ayenſt this roten ſinne of accidie and ſlouthe ſhuld men exerciſe hemſelf, and uſe hemſelf to do good werkes, and manly and vertuouſly cachen corage wel to do, thinking that our Lord Jeſu Criſt quiteth every good deed, be it never ſo lite. Uſage of labour is a gret thing: for it maketh, as ſayth Seint Bernard, the labourer to have ſtrong armes and hard ſinewes: and ſlouthe maketh

maketh hem feble and tendre. Than cometh drede for to beginne to werke any good werkes: for certes, he that enclineth to ſinne, him thinketh it is to gret an empriſe for to undertake the werkes of goodneſſe, and caſteth in his herte, that the circumſtances of goodneſſe ben ſo grevous and ſo chargeant for to ſuffre, that he dare not undertake to do werkes of goodneſſe, as ſayth Seint Gregorie.

Now cometh wanhope, that is, deſpeir of the mercy of God, that cometh ſomtime of to moche outrageous ſorwe, and ſomtime of to moche drede, imagining that he hath do ſo moche ſinne, that it wolde not availe him, though he wolde repent him, and forſake ſinne: thurgh which deſpeire or drede, he abandoneth all his herte to every maner ſinne, as ſayth Seint Auguſtine. Which dampnable ſinne, if it continue unto his end, it is cleped the ſinne of the holy goſt. This horrible ſinne is ſo perilous, that he that is deſpeired, ther n'is no felonie, ne no ſinne, that he douteth for to do, as ſhewed wel by Judas. Certes, aboven all ſinnes than is this ſinne moſt diſpleſant and moſt adverſarie to Criſt. Sothly, he that deſpeireth him, is like to the coward champion recreant, that flieth withouten nede.

Alas!

Alas! alas! nedeles is he recreant, and nedeles deſpeired. Certes, the mercy of God is ever redy to the penitent perſon, and is above all his werkes. Alas! cannot a man bethinke him on the Goſpel of Seint Luke, chap. xv. wheras Criſt ſayeth, that as wel ſhal ther be joye in heven upon a ſinful man that doth penitence, as upon ninety and nine rightful men that neden no penitence? Loke further, in the ſame Goſpel, the joye and the feſte of the good man that had loſt his ſone, whan his ſone was retourned with repentance to his fader. Can they not remembre hem alſo, (as ſayth Seint Luke, chap. xxiii.) how that the theſe that was honged beſide Jeſu Criſt, ſayd, Lord, remembre on me, whan thou comeſt in thy regne? Forſoth, ſaid Criſt, I ſay to thee, to-day ſhalt thou be with me in paradis. Certes, ther is non ſo horrible ſinne of man, that ne may in his lif be deſtroyed by penitence, thurgh vertue of the paſſion and of the deth of Criſt. Alas! what nedeth man than to be deſpeired, ſith that his mercy is ſo redy and large? Axe and have. Than cometh ſompnolence, that is, ſluggy ſlumbring, which maketh a man hevy, and dull in body and in ſoule, and this ſinne cometh of ſlouthe: and certes,

the

the time that by way of reſon man ſhuld not ſlepe, is by the morwe, but if ther were cauſe reſonable. For ſothly in the morwe tide is moſt covenable to a man to ſay his prayers, and for to think on God, and to honour God, and to yeve almeſſe to the poure that comen firſt in the name of Jeſu Criſt. Lo, what ſayth Salomon? Who ſo wol by the morwe awake to ſeke me, he ſhal find me. Than cometh negligence or reccheleſneſſe that recketh of nothing. And though that ignorance be mother of all harmes, certes, negligence is the norice. Negligence ne doth no force, whan he ſhal do a thing, whether he do it wel or badly.

The remedie of thiſe two ſinnes is, as ſayth the wiſe man, that he that dredeth God, ſpareth not to do that him ought to do; and he that loveth God, he wol do diligence to pleſe God by his werkes, and abandon himſelf, with all his might, wel for to do. Than cometh idelneſſe, that is the yate of all harmes. An idel man is like to a place that hath no walles; theras deviles may enter on every ſide, or ſhoot at him at diſcoverte by temptation on every ſide. This idelneſſe is the thurrok of all wicked and vilains thoughtes, and of all jangeles, trifles, and all ordure.

ordure. Certes heven is yeven to hem that will labour, and not to idel folk. Alſo David ſayth, they ne be not in the labour of men, ne they ſhul not ben whipped with men, that is to ſay, in purgatorie. Certes than ſemeth it they ſhul ben tormented with the devil in helle, but if they do penance.

Than cometh the ſinne that men clepen *Tarditas*, as whan a man is latered, or taryed or he wol tourne to God: and certes, that is a gret folie. He is like him that falleth in the diche, and wol not ariſe. And this vice cometh of falſe hope, that thinketh that he ſhal live long, but that hope failleth ful oft.

Than cometh Lacheſſe, that is, he that whan he beginneth any good werk, anon he wol forlete it and ſtint, as don they that have any wight to governe, and ne take of him no more kepe, anon as they find any contrary or any annoy. Thiſe ben the newe ſhepherdes, that let hir ſhepe wetingly go renne to the wolf, that is in the breres, and do no force of hir owen governance. Of this cometh poverte and deſtruction, both of ſpirituel and temporel thinges. Than cometh a maner coldneſſe, that freſeth all the herte of man. Than cometh undevotion,

thurgh

thurgh which a man is ſo blont, as ſayth Seint Bernard, and hath ſwiche langour in his ſoule, that he may neyther rede ne ſing in holy chirche, ne here ne thinke of no devotion, ne travaile with his hondes in no good werk, that it n'is to him unſavory and all apalled. Than wexeth he ſluggiſh and ſlombry, and ſone wol he be wroth, and ſone is enclined to hate and to envie. Than cometh the ſinne of worldly ſorwe ſwiche as is cleped *Triſtitia*, that ſleth a man, as ſayth Seint Poule. For certes ſwiche ſorwe werketh to the deth of the ſoule and of the body alſo, for therof cometh, that a man is annoied of his owen lif. Wherfore ſwiche ſorwe ſhorteth the lif of many a man, or that his time is come by way of kinde.

Remedium Accidiæ.

Ayenst this horrible ſinne of accidie, and the braunches of the ſame, ther is a vertue that is called *fortitudo* or ſtrength, that is, an affection, thurgh which a man deſpiſeth noyous thinges. This vertue is ſo mighty and ſo vigorous, that it dare withſtond mightily, and wraſtle ayenſt the aſſautes of the devil, and wiſely kepe himſelf fro periles that ben wicked; for it enhaunſeth

and enforceth the ſoule, right as accidie abateth and maketh it feble: for this *fortitudo* may endure with long ſufferance the travailles that ben covenable.

This vertue hath many ſpices; the firſt is cleped magnanimitee, that is to ſay, gret corage. For certes ther behoveth gret corage ayenſt accidie, leſt that it ſwalowe the ſoule by the ſinne of ſorwe, or deſtroy it with wanhope. Certes, this vertue maketh folk to undertake hard and grevous thinges by hir owen will, wiſely and reſonably. And for as moche as the devil fighteth ayenſt man more by queintiſe and fleight than by ſtrength, therfore ſhal a man withſtond him by wit, by reſon, and by diſcretion. Than ben ther the vertues of feith, and hope in God and in his ſeintes, to acheven and accomplice the good werkes, in the which he purpoſeth fermely to continue. Than cometh ſeuretee or ſikerneſſe, and that is whan a man ne douteth no travaile in time coming of the good werkes that he hath begonne. Than cometh magnificence, that is to ſay, whan a man doth and performeth gret werkes of goodneſſe, that he hath begonne, and that is the end why that men ſhuld do good werkes. For in the accompliſh-

accompliſhing of good werkes lieth the gret guerdon. Than is ther conſtance, that is ſtableneſſe of corage, and this ſhuld be in herte by ſtedfaſt feith, and in mouth, and in bering, in chere, and in dede. Eke ther ben mo ſpecial remedies ayenſt accidie, in divers werkes, and in conſideration of the peines of helle and of the joyes of heven, and in truſt of the grace of the holy goſt, that will yeve him might to performe his good entent.

De Avaritia.

After accidie wol I ſpeke of avarice, and of coveitiſe. Of which ſinne Seint Poule ſayth: The rote of all harmes is coveitiſe. For ſothly, whan the herte of man is confounded in itſelf and troubled, and that the ſoule hath loſt the comfort of God, than ſeketh he an idel ſolas of worldly thinges.

Avarice, after the deſcription of Seint Auguſtine, is a likerouſneſſe in herte to have erthly thinges. Som other folk ſayn, that avarice is for to purchaſe many erthly thinges, and nothing to yeve to hem that han nede. And underſtond wel, that avarice ſtandeth not only in land ne catel, but ſom time in ſcience and in

glorie, and in every maner outrageous thing is avarice. And the difference betwene avarice and coveitiſe is this: coveitiſe is for to coveit ſwiche thinges as thou haſt not; and avarice is to withholde and kepe ſwiche thinges as thou haſt, without rightful nede. Sothly, this avarice is a ſinne that is ful dampnable, for all holy writ curſeth it, and ſpeketh ayenſt it, for it doth wrong to Jeſu Criſt; for it bereveth him the love that men to him owen, and tourneth it backward ayenſt all reſon, and maketh that the avaricious man hath more hope in his catel than in Jeſu Criſt, and doth more obſervance in keping of his treſour, than he doth in the ſervice of Jeſu Criſt. And therfore ſayth Seint Poul, That an avaricious man is the thraldome of idolatrie.

What difference is ther betwix an idolaſtre, and an avaricious man? But that an idolaſtre peraventure ne hath not but o maumet or two, and the avaricious man hath many: for certes, every florein in his coffre is his maumet. And certes, the ſinne of maumetrie is the firſt that God defended in the ten commandments, as bereth witneſſe, *Exod. Cap.* xx. Thou ſhalt have no falſe goddes before me, ne thou ſhalt make to thee no graven thing. Thus is an avaricious man,

man, that loveth his treſour before God, an idolaſtre. And thurgh this curſed ſinne of avarice and coveitiſe cometh thiſe hard lordſhips, thurgh which men ben diſtreined by tallages, cuſtomes, and cariages, more than hir dutee or reſon is: and eke take they of hir bondmen amercementes, which might more reſonably be called extortions than amercementes. Of which amercementes, or raunſoming of bondmen, ſom lordes ſtewardes ſay, that it is rightful, for as moche as a cherl hath no temporel thing, that it ne is his lordes, as they ſay. But certes, thiſe lordſhippes don wrong, that bereven hir bondmen thinges that they never yave hem. *Auguſtinus de Civitate dei, Libro* ix. Soth is, that the condition of thraldom, and the firſt cauſe of thraldom was for ſinne. *Geneſis* v.

Thus may ye ſee, that the gilt deſerved thraldom, but not nature. Wherfore thiſe lordes ne ſhuld not to moche glorifie hem in hir lordſhipes, ſith that they by naturel condition ben not lordes of hir thralles, but that thraldom came firſt by the deſerte of ſinne. And furtherover, ther as the lawe ſayth, that temporel goodes of bondfolk ben the goodes of hir lord: ye, that is for to underſtond, the goodes of the

emperour, to defend hem in hir right, but not to robbe hem ne to reve hem. Therfore ſayth Seneca: The prudent ſhuld live benignely with the thral. Tho that thou clepeſt thy thralles, ben Goddes peple: for humble folk ben Criſtes frendes; they ben contubernial with the Lord thy king.

Thinke alſo, that of ſwiche ſeed as cherles ſpringen of ſwiche ſeed ſpringen lordes: as wel may the cherl be ſaved as the Lord. The ſame deth that taketh the cherl, ſwiche deth taketh the Lord. Wherfore I rede, do right ſo with thy cherl as thou woldeſt that thy Lord did with thee, if thou were in his plight. Every ſinful man is a cherl to ſinne: I rede thee, thou Lord, that thou reule thee in ſwiche wiſe, that thy cherles rather love thee than drede thee. I wote wel, that ther is degree above degree, as reſon is, and ſkill is, that men do hir devoir, ther as it is due: but certes, extortion, and deſpit of your underlinges, is dampnable.

And furthermore underſtond wel, that thiſe conqueroures or tyrantes maken ful oft thralles of hem, that ben borne of as royal blood as ben they that hem conqueren. This name of Thraldom was never erſt couthe, til that Noe ſayd, that

that his ſone Cham ſhuld be thrall to his brethren for his ſinne. What ſay we than of hem that pille and don extortions to holy Chirche? Certes, the ſwerd that men yeven firſt to a knight whan he is newe dubbed, ſignifieth, that he ſhuld defend holy Chirche, and not robbe it ne pille it: and who ſo doth is traitour to Criſt. As ſaith Seint Auguſtine, Tho ben the devils wolves, that ſtrangelen the ſhepe of Jeſu Criſt, and don worſe than wolves: for ſothly, whan the wolf hath full his wombe, he ſtinteth to ſtrangle ſhepe: but ſothly, the pillours and deſtroiers of holy Chirches goodes ne do not ſo, for they ne ſtint never to pille. Now as I have ſayd, ſith ſo is, that ſinne was firſt cauſe of thraldom, than is it thus, that at the time that all this world was in ſinne, than was all this world in thraldom, and in ſubjection: but certes, ſith the time of grace came, God ordeined, that ſom folk ſhuld be more high in eſtate and in degree, and ſom folk more lowe, and that everich ſhuld be ſerved in his eſtate and his degree. And therfore in ſom contrees ther as they ben thralles, whan they have tourned hem to the feith, they make hir thralles free out of thraldom: and therfore certes the Lord oweth to his man, that the man oweth to the Lord.

The Pope clepeth himſelf ſervant of the ſervants of God. But for as moche as the eſtate of holy Chirche ne might not have ben, ne the commun profite might not have be kept, ne pees ne reſt in erthe, but if God had ordeined, that ſom men have higher degree, and ſom men lower; therfore was ſoverayntee ordeined to kepe, and mainteine, and defend hire underlinges or hire ſubjectes in reſon, as ferforth as it lieth in hire power, and not to deſtroy hem ne confound. Wherfore I ſay, that thilke lordes that ben like wolves, that devoure the poſſeſſions or the catel of poure folk wrongfully, withouten mercy or meſure, they ſhul receive by the ſame meſure that they have meſured to poure folk the mercy of Jeſu Criſt, but they it amende. Now cometh deceit betwix marchant and marchant. And thou ſhalt underſtond, that marchandiſe is in two maners, that on is bodily, and that other is goſtly: that on is honeſt and leful, and that other is diſhoneſt and unleful. The bodily marchandiſe, that is leful and honeſt, is this: that ther as God hath ordeined, that a regne or a contree is ſuffiſant to himſelf, than it is honeſt and leful, that of the haboundaunce of this contree men helpe another contree that is nedy: and therfore ther muſt be

marchants

marchants to bring fro on contree to another hir marchandiſe. That other marchandiſe, that men haunten with fraude, and trecherie, and deceit, with leſinges and falſe othes, is right curſed and dampnable. Spirituel marchandiſe is proprely ſimonie, that is, ententif deſire to buy thing ſpirituel, that is, thing which apperteineth to the ſeintuarie of God, and to the cure of the ſoule. This deſire, if ſo be that a man do his diligence to performe it, al be it that his deſire ne take non effect, yet it is to him a dedly ſinne: and if he be ordered, he is irreguler. Certes ſimonie is cleped of Simon Magus, that wold have bought for temporel catel the yefte that God had yeven by the holy goſt to Seint Peter, and to the Apoſtles: and therfore underſtond ye, that both he that ſelleth and he that byeth thinges ſpirituel ben called Simoniackes, be it by catel, be it by procuring, or by fleſhly praier of his frendes fleſhly frendes, or ſpirituel frendes, fleſhly in two maners, as by kinrede or other frendes: ſothly, if they pray for him that is not worthy and able, it is ſimonie, if he take the benefice: and if he be worthy and able, ther is non. That other maner is, whan man, or woman, prayeth for folk to avancen hem only for wicked

wicked fleſhly affection which they have unto the perſons, and that is foule ſimonie. But certes, in ſervice, for which men yeven thinges ſpirituel unto hir ſervants, it muſt be underſtonde, that the ſervice muſt be honeſt, or elles not, and alſo, that it be without bargaining, and that the perſon be able. For (as ſayth Seint Damaſcen) all the ſinnes of the world, at regard of this ſinne, ben as thing of nought, for it is the greteſt ſinne that may be after the ſinne of Lucifer and of Anticriſt: for by this ſinne God forleſeth the chirche and the ſoule, which he bought with his precious blood, by hem that yeven chirches to hem that ben not digne, for they put in theves, that ſtelen the ſoules of Jeſu Criſt, and deſtroyen his patrimonie. By ſwiche undigne preeſtes and curates, han lewed men leſſe reverence of the ſacramentes of holy chirche: and ſwiche yevers of chirches put the children of Criſt out, and put into chirches the divels owen ſones: they ſellen the ſoules that lambes ſhuld kepe to the wolf, which ſtrangleth hem: and therfore ſhall they never have part of the paſture of lambes, that is, in the bliſſe of heven. Now cometh haſardrie with his apertenauntes, as tables and rafles, of which cometh deceit,

deceit, falſe othes, chidings, and all raving, blaſpheming, and reneying of God, hate of his neyghbours, waſt of goodes, miſpending of time, and ſomtime manſlaughter. Certes, haſardours ne mow not be without grete ſinne. Of avarice comen eke leſinges, theft, falſe witneſſe, and falſe othes: and ye ſhul underſtonde, that theſe be gret ſinnes, and expreſſe ayenſt the commandements of God, as I have ſayd. Falſe witneſſe is eke in word, and in dede: in word, as for to bereve thy neighbours good name by thy falſe witneſſe, or bereve him his catel or his heritage by thy falſe witneſſing, whan thou for ire, or for mede, or for envie, bereſt falſe witneſſe, or accuſeſt him, or excuſeſt thyſelf falſely. Ware ye queſtmongers and notaries: certes, for falſe witneſſing, was Suſanna in ful gret ſorwe and peine, and many another mo. The ſinne of theft is alſo expreſſe ayenſt Goddes heſt, and that in two maners, temporel, and ſpirituel: the temporel theft is, as for to take thy neighbours catel ayenſt his will, be it by force or by ſleight; be it in meting or meſure; by ſteling; by falſe enditements upon him; and in borowing of thy neighbours catel, in entent never to pay it ayen, and ſemblable thinges. Spirituel theft is ſacrilege,

lege, that is to ſay, hurting of holy thinges, or of thinges ſacred to Criſt, in two maners; by reſon of the holy place, as chirches or chirches hawes; (for every vilains ſinne, that men don in ſwiche places, may be called ſacrilege, or every violence in ſemblable places) alſo they that withdrawe falſely the rentes and rightes that longen to holy chirche; and plainly and generally, ſacrilege is to reve holy thing fro holy place, or unholy thing out of holy place, or holy thing out of unholy place.

Remedium Avaritiæ.

Now ſhul ye underſtond, that releving of avarice is miſericorde and pitee largely taken. And men might axe, why that miſericorde and pitee are releving of avarice; certes, the avaricious man ſheweth no pitee ne miſericorde to the nedeful man. For he deliteth him in the keping of his treſour, and not in the reſcouing ne releving of his even Criſten. And therfore ſpeke I firſt of miſericorde. Than is miſericorde (as ſayth the Philoſophre) a vertue, by which the corage of man is ſtirred by the miſeſe of him that is miſeſed. Upon which miſericorde foloweth pitee, in performing and fulfilling of charitable werkes of

of mercie, helping and comforting him that is miſeſed. And certes, this meveth a man to miſericorde of Jeſu Criſt, that he yave himſelf for our offence, and ſuffred deth for miſericorde, and foryaf us our original ſinnes, and therby releſed us fro the peine of hell, and amenuſed the peines of purgatory by penitence, and yeveth us grace wel to do, and at laſt the bliſſe of heven. The ſpices of miſericorde ben for to lene, and eke for to yeve, and for to foryeve and releſe, and for to have pitee in herte, and compaſſion of the miſchefe of his even Criſten, and alſo to chaſtiſe ther as nede is. Another maner of remedy ayenſt avarice, is reſonable largeſſe: but ſothly, here behoveth the conſideration of the grace of Jeſu Criſt, and of the temporel goodes, and alſo of the goodes perdurable that Jeſu Criſt yave to us, and to have remembrance of the deth which he ſhal receive, he wote not whan: and eke that he ſhal forgon all that he hath, ſave only that which he hath diſpended in good werkes.

But for as moche as ſom folk ben unmeſurable, men oughten for to avoid and eſchue fool-largeſſe, the whiche men clepen waſte. Certes, he that is fool-large, he yeveth not his catel, but he leſeth his catel. Sothly, what thing that he yeveth

yeveth for vaine-glory, as to minſtrals, and to folk that bere his renome in the world, he hath do ſinne therof, and non almeſſe: certes, he leſeth foule his good, that ne ſeketh with the yefte of his good nothing but ſinne. He is like to an hors that ſeketh rather to drink drovy or troubled water, than for to drink water of the clere well. And for as moche as they yeven ther as they ſhuld nat yeven, to hem apperteineth thilke maliſon, that Criſt ſhal yeve at the day of dome to hem that ſhul be dampned.

De Gulâ.

After avarice cometh glotonie, which is expreſſe ayenſt the commandement of God. Glotonie is unmeſurable appetit to ete or to drinke; or elles to do in ought to the unmeſurable appetit and diſordeined coveitiſe to ete or drinke. This ſinne corrupted all this world, as is wel ſhewed in the ſinne of Adam and of Eve. Loke alſo what ſayth Seint Poule of glotonie. Many (ſayth he) gon, of which I have ofte ſaid to you, and now I ſay it weping, that they ben the enemies of the croſſe of Criſt, of which the end is deth, and of which hir wombe is hir God and hir glorie; in confuſion of hem that ſo ſerven erthly thinges.

thinges. He that is uſant to this ſinne of glotonie, he ne may no ſinne withſtond, he muſt be in ſervage of all vices, for it is the devils horde, ther he hideth him and reſteth. This ſinne hath many ſpices. The firſt is dronkenneſſe, that is the horrible ſepulture of mannes reſon: and therfore whan a man is dronke, he hath loſt his reſon: and this is dedly ſinne. But ſothly, whan that a man is not wont to ſtrong drinkes, and peraventure ne knoweth not the ſtrength of the drinke, or hath febleneſſe in his hed, or hath travailled, thurgh which he drinketh the more, al be he ſodenly caught with drinke, it is no dedly ſinne, but venial. The ſecond ſpice of glotonie is, that the ſpirit of a man wexeth all trouble for dronkenneſſe, and bereveth a man the diſcretion of his wit. The thridde ſpice of glotonie is, whan a man devoureth his mete, and hath not rightful maner of eting. The fourthe is, whan thurgh the gret abundance of his mete, the humours in his body ben diſtempered. The fifthe is, foryetfulneſſe by to moche drinking, for which ſometime a man forgeteth by the morwe, what he did over eve.

In other maner ben diſtinct the ſpices of glotonie, after Seint Gregorie. The firſt is, for

to

to ete before time. The ſecond is, whan a man geteth him to delicat mete or drinke. The thridde is, whan men taken to moche over meſure. The fourth is curioſitee, with gret entent to maken and appareille his mete. The fifth is, for to ete gredily. Thiſe ben the five fingers of the devils hond, by which he draweth folk to the ſinne.

Remedium Gulæ.

AYENST glotonie the remedie is abſtinence, as ſayth Galien: but that I holde not meritorie, if he do it only for the hele of his body. Seint Auguſtine wol that abſtinence be don for vertue, and with patience. Abſtinence (ſayth he) is litel worth, but if a man have good will therto, and but it be enforced by patience and charitee, and that men don it for Goddes ſake, and in hope to have the bliſſe in heven.

The felawes of abſtinence ben attemperance, that holdeth the mene in alle thinges; alſo ſhame, that eſcheweth all diſhoneſtee; ſuffiſance, that ſeketh no riche metes ne drinkes, ne doth no force of non outrageous appareilling of mete; meſure alſo, that reſtreineth by reſon the unmeſurable appetit of eting: ſoberneſſe alſo, that reſtreineth

reſtreineth the outrage of drinke; ſparing alſo, that reſtreineth the delicat eſe, to ſit long at mete, wherfore ſom folk ſtanden of hir owen will whan they ete, becauſe they wol ete at leſſe leiſer.

De Luxuriâ.

After glotonie cometh lecherie, for thiſe two ſinnes ben ſo nigh coſins, that oft time they wol not depart. God wote this ſinne is ful diſpleſant to God, for he ſaid himſelf; Do no lecherie. And therfore he putteth gret peine ayenſt this ſinne. For in the old lawe, if a woman thrall were taken in this ſinne, ſhe ſhuld be beten with ſtaves to the deth: and if ſhe were a gentilwoman, ſhe ſhuld be ſlain with ſtones: and if ſhe were a biſhoppes doughter, ſhe ſhuld be brent by Goddes commandement. Moreover, for the ſinne of lecherie God dreint all the world, and after that he brent five citees with thonder and lightning, and ſanke hem doun into hell.

Now let us ſpeke than of the ſaid ſtinking ſinne of lecherie, that men clepen avoutrie, that is of wedded folk, that is to ſay, if that on of hem be wedded, or elles both. Seint John ſayth,

That avouterers ſhul ben in helle in a ſtacke brenning of fire and of brimſtone, in fire for hir lecherie, in brimſtone for the ſtenche of hir ordure. Certes the breking of this ſacrament is an horrible thing: it was made of God himſelf in Paradis, and confermed by Jeſu Criſt, as witneſſeth Seint Mathew in the Goſpel: a man ſhal let fader and moder, and take him to his wif, and they ſhal be two in on fleſh. This ſacrament betokeneth the knitting together of Criſt and holy chirche. And not only that God forbade avoutrie in dede, but alſo he commanded, that thou ſhuldeſt not coveit thy neighboures wif. In this heſte (ſayth Seint Auguſtine) is forboden all maner coveitiſe to do lecherie. Lo, what ſayth Seint Mathew in the Goſpel, That who ſo ſeeth a woman, to coveitiſe of his luſt, he hath don lecherie with hire in his herte. Here may ye ſee, that not only the dede of this ſinne is forboden, but eke the deſire to don that ſinne. This curſed ſinne annoyeth grevouſly hem that it haunt: and firſt to the ſoule, for he obligeth it to ſinne and to peine of deth, which is perdurable; and to the body annoyeth it grevouſly alſo, for it drieth him and waſteth, and ſhent him, and of his blood he maketh ſacrifice to the fend

fend of helle: it waſteth eke his catel and his ſubſtance. And certes, if it be a foule thing a man to waſte his catel on women, yet is it a fouler thing, whan that for ſwiche ordure women diſpenden upon men hir catel and hir ſubſtance. This ſinne, as ſayth the Prophet, bereveth man and woman hir good fame and all hir honour, and it is ful pleſant to the devil: for therby winneth he the moſte partie of this wretched world. And right as a marchant deliteth him moſt in that chaffare which he hath moſt avantage and profite of, right ſo deliteth the fend in this ordure.

This is that other hond of the devil, with five fingers, to cacche the peple to his vilanie. The firſt fingre is the foole loking of the foole woman and of the foole man, that ſleth right as the Baſilicok ſleth folk by venime of his ſight: for the coveitiſe of the eyen foloweth the coveitiſe of the herte. The ſecond fingre is the vilains touching in wicked maner. And therfore ſayth Salomon, that who ſo toucheth and handleth a woman, he fareth as the man that handleth the ſcorpion, which ſtingeth and ſodenly ſleth thurgh his enveniming; or as who ſo that toucheth warme pitch it ſhendeth his

fingers. The thridde is foule wordes, whiche fareth like fire, which right anon brenneth the herte. The fourth finger is kiſſing: and trewely he were a gret foole that wold kiſſe the mouthe of a brenning oven or of a fourneis; and more fooles bèn they that kiſſen in vilainie, for that mouth is the mouth of helle; and namely thiſe olde dotardes holours, which wol kiſſe, and flicker, and beſie hemſelf, though they may nought do. Certes they ben like to houndes: for an hound whan he cometh by the roſer, or by other buſſhes, though ſo be that he may not piſſe, yet wol he heve up his leg and make a contenance to piſſe. And for that many man weneth that he may not ſinne for no likerouſneſſe that he doth with his wif, trewely that opinion is falſe: God wote a man may ſlee himſelf with his owen knif, and make himſelf dronken of his owen tonne. Certes be it wif, be it childe, or any worldly thing, that he loveth before God, it is his maumet, and he is an idolaſtre. A man ſhuld love his wif by diſcretion, patiently and attemprely, and than is ſhe as though it were his ſuſter. The fifth fingre of the divels hond, is the ſtinking dede of lecherie. Trewely the five fingers of glotonie the fend putteth in the wombe of

of a man: and with his five fingers of lecherie he gripeth him by the reines, for to throwe him into the fourneis of helle, ther as they ſhul have the fire and the wormes that ever ſhul laſten, and weping and wayling, and ſharpe hunger and thurſt, and griſlineſſe of divels, whiche ſhul all to-trede hem withouten reſpite and withouten ende. Of lecherie, as I ſayd, ſourden and ſpringen divers ſpices: as fornication, that is betwene man and woman which ben not maried, and is dedly ſinne, and ayenſt nature. All that is enemy and deſtruction to nature, is ayenſt nature. Parfay the reſon of a man eke telleth him wel that it is dedly ſinne; for as moche as God forbad lecherie. And Seint Poule yeveth hem the regne, that n'is dewe to no wight but to hem that don dedely ſinne. Another ſinne of lecherie is, to bereven a maid of hire maidenhed, for he that ſo doth, certes he caſteth a mayden out of the higheſt degree that is in this preſent lif, and bereveth hire thilke precious fruit that the book clepeth the hundreth fruit. I ne can ſay it non otherwiſe in Engliſh, but in Latine it hight *Centeſimus fructus*. Certes he that ſo doth, is the cauſe of many damages and vilanies, mo than any man can reken: right as he ſomtime is

cauſe of all dammages that beſtes do in the feld, that breketh the hedge of the cloſure, thurgh which he deſtroyeth that may not be reſtored: for certes no more may maidenhed be reſtored, than an arme, that is ſmitten fro the body, may returne ayen and wexe: ſhe may have mercy, this wote I wel, if that ſhe have will to do penitence, but never ſhal it be but that ſhe is corrupte. And all be it ſo that I have ſpoke ſomwhat of avoutrie, it is good to ſhewe the periles that longen to avoutrie, for to eſchewe that foule ſinne. Avoutrie, in Latine, is for to ſaye, approching of another mannes bedde, thurgh whiche tho, that ſomtime were on fleſhe, abandone hir bodies to other perſons. Of this ſinne, as ſayth the wiſe man, folow many harmes: firſte breking of feith; and certes feith is the key of Criſtendom, and whan that key is broken and lorne, ſothly Criſtendom is lorne, and ſtont vaine and without fruit. This ſinne alſo is theft, for theft generally is to reve a wight his thinges ayenſt his will. Certes, this is the fouleſt theft that may be, whan that a woman ſteleth hire body from hire huſbond, and yeveth it to hire holour to defoule it: and ſteleth hire ſoule fro Criſt, and yeveth it to the devil: this is a fouler

thefte

thefte than for to breke a chirche and ſtele away the chalice, for thiſe avouterers breken the temple of God ſpirituelly, and ſtelen the veſſell of grace; that is the body and the ſoule: for which Criſte ſhal deſtroy hem, as ſayth Seint Poule. Sothly of this theft douted gretly Joſeph, whan that his Lordes wif prayed him of vilainie, whan he ſayde: Lo, my Lady, how my Lord hath take to me under my warde all that he hath in this world, ne nothing is out of my power, but only ye that ben his wif: and how ſhuld I than do this wickedneſſe, and ſinne ſo horribly ayenſt God, and ayenſt my Lord? God it forbede. Alas! all to litel is ſwiche trouth now yfounde. The thridde harme is the filth, thurgh which they breke the commandement of God, and defoule the auter of matrimonies, that is Criſt. For certes, in ſo moche as the ſacrament of mariage is ſo noble and ſo digne, ſo moche is it the greter ſinne for to breke it: for God made mariage in Paradis in the eſtate of innocencie, to multiplie mankinde to the ſervice of God, and therfore is the breking therof the more grevous, of which breking come falſe heires oft time, that wrongfully occupien folkes heritages: and therfore wol Criſt put hem out of the regne

of heven, that is heritage to good folk. Of this breking cometh eke oft time, that folk unware wedde or ſinne with hir owen kinrede: and namely thiſe harlottes, that haunten bordelles of thiſe foule women, that may be likened to a commune gong, wheras men purge hir ordure. What ſay we alſo of putours, that live by the horrible ſinne of puterie, and conſtreine women to yelde hem a certain rent of hir bodily puterie, ye, ſomtime his owen wif or his childe, as don thiſe baudes? certes, thiſe ben curſed ſinnes. Underſtond alſo, that avoutrie is ſet in the ten commandements betwene theft and manſlaughter, for it is the greteſt theft that may be, for it is theft of body and of ſoule, and it is like to homicide, for it kerveth atwo and breketh atwo hem that firſt were made on fleſh. And therfore by the old lawe of God they ſhuld be ſlaine, but natheleſſe, by the lawe of Jeſu Criſt, that is the lawe of pitee, whan he ſayd to the woman that was found in avoutrie, and ſhuld have be ſlain with ſtones, after the will of the Jewes, as was hir lawe; Go, ſaid Jeſu Criſt, and have no more will to do ſinne; ſothly, the vengeance of avoutrie is awarded to the peine of helle, but if ſo be that it be diſcombered by penitence. Yet

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ben ther mo ſpices of this curſed ſinne, as whan that on of hem is religious, or elles both, or of folk that ben entred into ordre, as ſub-deken, deken, or preeſt, or hoſpitalers: and ever the higher that he is in ordre, the greter is the ſinne. The thinges that gretly agrege hir ſinne, is the breking of hir avow of chaſtitee, whan they received the ordre: and moreover ſoth is, that holy ordre is chefe of all the treſorie of God, and is a ſpecial ſigne and marke of chaſtitee, to ſhew that they ben joined to chaſtitee, which is the moſte precious lif that is: and thiſe ordered folk ben ſpecially titled to God, and of the ſpecial meinie of God: for which, whan they don dedly ſinne, they ben the ſpecial traitours of God and of his peple, for they live by the peple to praye for the peple, and whiles they ben ſwiche traitours hir prayeres availe not to the peple. Preeſtes ben as angels, as by the myſterie of hir dignitee: but forſoth Seint Poule ſaith, That Sathanas transfourmeth him in an angel of light. Sothly, the preeſt that haunteth dedly ſinne, he may be likened to an angel of derkeneſſe, transfourmed into an angel of light: he ſemeth an angel of light, but for ſoth he is an angel of derkeneſſe. Swiche preeſtes be the ſones of

of Hely, as is ſhewed in the book of Kinges, that they were the ſones of Belial, that is, the divel. Belial is to ſay, withouten juge, and ſo faren they; hem thinketh that they be free, and have no juge, no more than hath a free boll, that taketh which cow that him liketh in the toun. So faren they by women; for right as on free boll is ynough for all a toun, right ſo is a wicked preeſt corruption ynough for all a pariſh, or for all a countree: thiſe preeſtes, as ſayth the book, ne cannot miniſter the myſterie of preeſthood to the peple, ne they knowe not God, ne they hold hem not apaied, as ſaith the book, of ſodden fleſh that was to hem offred, but they take by force the fleſh that is raw. Certes, right ſo thiſe ſhrewes ne hold hem not apaied of roſted fleſh and ſodden, with which the peple feden hem in gret reverence, but they wol have raw fleſh as folkes wives and hir doughters: and certes, thiſe women that conſenten to hir harlotrie, don gret wrong to Criſt and to holy Chirche, and to all Halowes, and to all Soules, for they bereven all thiſe hem that ſhuld worſhip Criſt and holy Chirche, and pray for Criſten ſoules: and therfore han ſwiche preeſtes, and hir lemmans alſo that conſenten to hir lecherie, the maliſon of the court

court Criſten, til they come to amendement. The thridde ſpice of avoutrie is ſomtime betwix a man and his wif, and that is, whan they take no regard in hir aſſembling but only to hir fleſhly delit, as ſaith Seint Jerome, and ne recken of nothing but that they ben aſſembled becauſe they ben maried; all is good ynough, as thinketh to hem. But in ſwiche folk hath the divel power, as ſaid the angel Raphael to Tobie, for in hir aſſembling, they putten Jeſu Criſt out of hir herte, and yeven hemſelf to all ordure. The fourth ſpice is of hem that aſſemble with hir kinrede, or with hem that ben of on affinitee, or elles with hem with which hir fathers or hir kinred have deled in the ſinne of lecherie: this ſinne maketh hem like to houndes, that taken no kepe of kinrede. And certes, parentele is in two maners: eyther goſtly or fleſhly: goſtly, is for to delen with hir godſibbes: for right ſo as he that engendreth a child, is his fleſhly father, right ſo is his godfather his father ſpirituel: for which a woman may in no leſſe ſinne aſſemble with hire godſib, than with hir owen fleſhly broder. The ſifthe ſpice is that abhominable ſinne, of which abhominable ſinne no man unneth ought to ſpeke ne write, natheles it

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is openly reherſed in holy writ. This curſednesſe don men and women in diverſe entent and in diverſe maner: but though that holy writ ſpeke of horrible ſinne, certes holy writ may not be defouled, no more than the ſonne that ſhineth on the myxene. Another ſinne apperteineth to lecherie, that cometh in ſleping, and this ſinne cometh often to hem that ben maidens, and eke to hem that ben corrupt; and this ſinne men call pollution, that cometh of foure maners; ſomtime it cometh of languiſhing of the body, for the humours ben to ranke and haboundant in the body of man; ſomtime of infirmitee, for febleneſſe of the vertue retentif, as phiſike maketh mention; ſomtime of ſurfet of mete and drinke; and ſomtime of vilains thoughtes that ben encloſed in mannes minde whan he goth to ſlepe, which may not be withouten ſinne; for whiche men muſt kepe hem wiſely, or elles may they ſinne ful grevouſly.

Remedium luxuriæ.

Now cometh the remedy ayenſt lecherie, and that is generally chaſtitee and continence, that reſtreineth all diſordinate mevings that co-

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men of fleſhly talents: and ever the greter merite ſhal he have that moſt reſtreineth the wicked enchaufing or ardure of this ſinne; and this is in two maners: that is to ſay, chaſtitee in mariage, and chaſtitee in widewhood. Now ſhalt thou underſtonde, that matrimony is leful aſſembling of man and woman, that receiven by vertue of this ſacrement the bonde, thurgh whiche they may not be departed in all hir lif, that is to ſay, while that they live bothe. This, as ſaith the book, is a ful gret ſacrement; God made it (as I have ſaid) in paradis, and wold himſelf be borne in mariage: and for to halowe mariage he was at a wedding, wheras he tourned water into wine, whiche was the firſt miracle that he wrought in erthe before his diſciples. The trewe effect of mariage clenſeth fornication, and repleniſheth holy chirche of good lignage, for that is the ende of mariage, and chaungeth dedly ſinne into venial ſinne betwene hem that ben wedded, and maketh the hertes all on of hem that ben ywedded, as wel as the bodies. This is veray mariage that was eſtabliſhed by God, er that ſinne began, whan naturel lawe was in his right point in paradis; and it was ordeined, that o man ſhuld have but

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o woman, and o woman but o man, as ſayth Seint Auguſtine, by many reſons.

Firſt, for mariage is figured betwix Criſt and holy chirche; and another is, for a man is hed of the woman; (algate by ordinance it ſhuld be ſo;) for if a woman had mo men than on, than ſhuld ſhe have mo hedes than on, and that were an horrible thing before God; and alſo a woman mighte not pleſe many folk at ones: and alſo ther ſhuld never be pees ne reſt among hem, for everich of hem wold axe his owen right. And furthermore, no man ſhuld knowe his owen engendrure, ne who ſhuld have his heritage, and the woman ſhuld be the leſſe beloved for the time that ſhe were conjunct to many men.

Now cometh how that a man ſhuld bere him with his wif, and namely in two thinges, that is to ſay, in ſuffrance and in reverence, and this ſhewed Criſt whan he firſte made woman. For he ne made hire of the hed of Adam, for ſhe ſhuld not claime to gret lordſhippe; for ther as the woman hath the maiſtrie, ſhe maketh to moche diſarray: ther nede non enſamples of this, the experience that we have day by day ought ynough ſuffice. Alſo certes, God ne made not

not woman of the foot of Adam, for ſhe ſhuld not be holden to lowe, for ſhe cannot patiently ſuffer: but God made woman of the rib of Adam, for woman ſhuld be felaw unto man. Man ſhuld bere him to his wif in feith, in trouth, and in love; as ſayth Seint Poule, that a man ſhuld love his wif, as Criſt loved holy chirche, that loved it ſo wel that he died for it: ſo ſhuld a man for his wif, if it were nede.

Now how that a woman ſhuld be ſubget to hire huſbond, that telleth Seint Peter; firſt in obedience. And, eke as ſayth the decree, a woman that is a wif, as long as ſhe is a wif, ſhe hath non auctoritee to ſwere ne bere witneſſe, without leve of hire huſbonde, that is hire lord; algate he ſhuld be ſo by reſon. She ſhuld alſo ſerve him in all honeſtee, and ben attempre of hire array. I wete wel that they ſhuld ſet hir entent to pleſe hir huſbonds, but not by queintiſe of hir array. Seint Jerom ſayth: wives that ben appareilled in ſilke and precious purple, ne mow not cloth hem in Jeſu Criſt. Seint Gregorie ſayth alſo: that no wight ſeketh precious array, but only for vain glorie to be honoured the more of the peple. It is a gret folie, a woman to have a faire array outward,

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and hireſelf to be foule inward. A wif ſhuld alſo be meſurable in loking, in bering, and in laughing, and diſcrete in all hire wordes and hire dedes, and above all worldly thinges, ſhe ſhulde love hire huſbonde with all hire herte, and to him be trewe of hire body: ſo ſhuld every huſbond eke be trewe to his wif: for ſith that all the body is the huſbondes, ſo ſhuld hire herte be alſo, or elles ther is betwix hem two, as in that, no parfit mariage. Than ſhul men underſtond, that for three thinges a man and his wif fleſhly may aſſemble. The firſt is, for the entent of engendrure of children, to the ſervice of God, for certes that is the cauſe final of matrimonie. Another cauſe is, to yelde eche of hem to other the dettes of hir bodies: for neyther of hem hath power of his owen bodie. The thridde is, for to eſchew lecherie and vilanie. The fourth is for ſoth dedly ſinne. As to the firſt, it is meritorie: the ſecond alſo, for, as ſayth the decree, ſhe hath merite of chaſtitee, that yeldeth to hire huſbond the dette of hire body, ye though it be ayenſt hire liking, and the luſt of hire herte. The thridde maner is venial ſinne; trewely, ſcarſely may any of thiſe be without venial ſinne, for the corruption and for

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the delit therof. The fourth maner is for to underſtond, if they aſſemble only for amourous love, and for non of the foreſaid cauſes, but for to accompliſh hir brenning delit, they recke not how oft, ſothly it is dedly ſinne: and yet with ſorwe, ſom folk wol peine hem more to do, than to hir appetit ſufficeth.

The ſecond maner of chaſtitee is for to be a clene widew, and eſchue the embracing of a man, and deſire the embracing of Jeſu Criſt. Thiſe ben tho that have ben wives, and have forgon hir huſbondes, and eke women that have don lecherie, and ben releved by penance. And certes, if that a wif coud kepe hire all chaſt, by licence of hire huſbond, ſo that ſhe yave no cauſe ne non occaſion that he agilted, it were to hire a gret merite. This maner of women, that obſerven chaſtitee, muſt be clene in herte as wel as in body, and in thought, and meſurable in clothing and in contenance, abſtinent in eting and drinking, in ſpeking, and in dede, and than is ſhe the veſſel or the boiſte of the bleſſed Magdeleine, that fulfilleth holy chirche of good odour. The thridde maner of chaſtitee is virginitee, and it behoveth that ſhe be holy in herte, and clene of body, than is ſhe the ſpouſe of Jeſu Criſt, and

ſhe is the lif of angels: ſhe is the preiſing of this world, and ſhe is as thiſe martirs in egalitee: ſhe hath in hire, that tonge may not telle, ne herte thinke. Virginitee bare our Lord Jeſu Criſt, and virgin was himſelf.

Another remedie againſt lecherie is ſpecially to withdraw ſwiche thinges, as yeven occaſion to that vilanie: as eſe, eting, and drinking: for certes, whan the pot boileth ſtrongly, the beſt remedie is to withdraw the fire. Sleping long in gret quiet is alſo a gret nourice to lecherie.

Another remedie ayenſt lecherie is, that a man or a woman eſchewe the compagnie of hem, by which he douteth to be tempted: for all be it ſo that the dede be withſtonden, yet is ther gret temptation. Sothly a white wall, although it ne brenne not fully with ſticking of a candle, yet is the wall black of the leyte. Ful oft time I rede, that no man truſt in his owen perfection, but he be ſtronger than Sampſon, or holier than David, or wiſer than Salomon.

Now after that I have declared you as I can of the ſeven dedly ſinnes, and ſom of hir braunches, and the remedies, ſothly, if I coude, I wold tell you the ten commandements, but ſo high doctrine I lete to divines. Natheles, I hope to God

God they ben touched in this tretiſe everich of hem alle.

Now for as moche as the ſecond part of penitence ſtont in confeſſion of mouth, as I began in the firſt chapitre, I ſay Seint Auguſtine ſaith: Sinne is every word and every dede, and all that men coveiten ayenſt the law of Jeſu Criſt; and this is for to ſinne, in herte, in mouth, and in dede, by the five wittes, which ben ſight, hering, ſmelling, taſting or ſavouring, and feling. Now is it good to underſtond the circumſtances, that agregen moche every ſinne. Thou ſhalt conſider what thou art that doſt the ſinne, whether thou be male or female, yonge or olde, gentil or thrall, free or ſervant, hole or ſike, wedded or ſingle, ordered or unordered, wiſe or foole, clerk or ſeculer; if ſhe be of thy kinred, bodily or goſtly, or non; if any of thy kinred have ſinned with hire or no, and many mo thinges.

Another circumſtaunce is this, whether it be don in fornication, or in advoutrie, or no, in maner of homicide or non, a horrible gret ſinne or ſmal, and how long thou haſt continued in ſinne. The thridde circumſtance is the place, ther thou haſt don ſinne, whether in other mennes houſes, or in thin owen, in feld, in chirche,

or in chirchhawe, in chirche dedicate, or non. For if the chirche be halowed, and man or woman ſpille his kinde within that place, by way of ſinne or by wicked temptation, the chirche were enterdited til it were reconciled by the Biſhop; and if it were a preeſt that did ſwiche vilanie, the terme of all his lif he ſhuld no more ſing Maſſe: and if he did, he ſhuld do dedly ſinne, at every time that he ſo ſong Maſſe. The fourth circumſtance is, by whiche mediatours, as by meſſagers, or for enticement, or for conſentment, to bere compagnie with felawſhip; for many a wretche, for to bere felawſhip, wol go to the divel of helle. Wherfore, they that eggen or conſenten to the ſinne, ben partners of the ſinne, and of the dampnation of the ſinner. The fifth circumſtance is, how many times that he hath ſinned, if it be in his minde, and how oft he hath fallen. For he that oft falleth in ſinne, he deſpiſeth the mercy of God, and encreſeth his ſinne, and is unkind to Criſt, and he waxeth the more feble to withſtand ſinne, and ſinneth the more lightly, and the later ariſeth, and is more ſlow to ſhrive him, and namely to him that hath ben his confeſſour. For which that folk, whan they fall ayen to hir old folies, either they forleten hir

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old confeſſour al utterly, or elles they departen hir ſhrift in divers places: but ſothly ſwiche departed ſhrift deſervēth no mercie of God for hir ſinnes. The ſixte circumſtance is, why that a man ſinneth, as by what temptation; and if himſelf procure thilke temptation, or by exciting of other folk; or if he ſinne with a woman by force or by hire owen aſſent; or if the woman maugre hire hed have ben enforced or non, this ſhal ſhe tell, and wheder it were for covetiſe or poverte, and if it were by hire procuring or non, and ſwiche other thinges. The ſeventh circumſtance is, in what maner he hath don his ſinne, or how that ſhe hath ſuffered that folk have don to hire. And the ſame ſhal the man tell plainly, with all the circumſtances, and wheder he hath ſinned with commun bordel women or non, or don his ſinne in holy times or non, in faſting times or non, or before his ſhrift, or after his later ſhrift, and hath peraventure broken therby his penance enjoined, by whos helpe or whos conſeil, by ſorcerie or crafte, all muſt be told. All thiſe thinges, after that they ben gret or ſmale, engreggen the conſcience of man or woman. And eke the preeſt that is thy juge, may the better be aviſed of his jugement in

yeving of penance, and that ſhal be after thy contrition. For underſtond wel, that after the time that a man hath defouled his baptiſme by ſinne, if he wol come to ſalvation, ther is non other way but by penance, and ſhrifte, and ſatiſfaction; and namely by tho two, if ther be a confeſſour to whom he may ſhrive him, and that he firſt be veray contrite and repentant, and the thridde if he have lif to performe it.

Than ſhal a man loke and conſider, that if he wol make a trewe and a profitable confeſſion, ther muſt be foure conditions. Firſt it muſt be in ſorowful bitterneſſe of herte, as ſayth the King Ezechiel to God; I wol remember all the yeres of my lif in the bitterneſſe of my herte. This condition of bitterneſſe hath five ſignes; The firſt is, that confeſſion muſt be ſhamefaſt, not for to coveren ne hide his ſinne, but for he hath agilted his God and defouled his ſoule. And hereof ſayth Seint Auguſtin: the herte travaileth for ſhame of his ſinne, and for he hath gret ſhamfaſtneſſe he is digne to have gret mercie of God. Swiche was the confeſſion of the Publican, that wold not heve up his eyen to heven for he had offended God of heven: for which ſhamefaſtneſſe he had anon the mercy of God. And therfore

fore ſaith Seint Auguſtine: That ſwiche ſhame-faſt folk ben next foryeveneſſe and mercy. Another ſigne, is humilitee in confeſſion: of whiche ſayth Seint Peter; Humbleth you under the might of God: the hond of God is mighty in confeſſion, for therby God foryeveth thee thy ſinnes, for he alone hath the power. And this humilitee ſhal be in herte, and in ſigne outwarde: for right as he hath humilitee to God in his herte, right ſo ſhuld he humble his body outward to the preeſt, that ſitteth in Goddes place. For which in no maner, ſith that Criſt is ſoveraine, and the preeſt mene and mediatour betwix Criſt and the ſinner, and the ſinner is laſt by way of reſon, than ſhuld not the ſinner ſitte as high as his confeſſour, but knele before him or at his feet, but if maladie diſtrouble it: for he ſhal not take kepe who ſitteth ther, but in whos place he ſitteth. A man that hath treſpaſſed to a Lord, and cometh for to axe mercie and maken his accorde, and ſetteth him doun anon by the Lord, men wolde holde him outrageous, and not worthy ſo ſone for to have remiſſion ne mercy. The thridde ſigne is, that the ſhrift ſhuld be ful of teres, if men mowen wepe, and if they mowe not wepe with hir bodily eyen, than let hem wepe in

hir herte. Swiche was the confeſſion of Seint Peter; for after that he had forſake Jeſu Criſt, he went out and wept ful bitterly. The fourth ſigne is, that he ne lete not for ſhame to ſhrive him and ſhewe his confeſſion. Swiche was the confeſſion of Magdeleine, that ne ſpared, for no ſhame of hem that weren at the feſte, to go to our Lord Jeſu Criſt and beknowe to him hire ſinnes. The fifthe ſigne is, that a man or a woman be obeiſant to receive the penance that hem is enjoined. For certes Jeſu Criſt for the gilt of man was obedient to the deth.

The ſecond condition of veray confeſſion is, that it be haſtily don: for certes, if a man hadde a dedly wound, ever the lenger that he taried to wariſhe himſelf, the more wold it corrupt and haſte him to his deth, and alſo the wound wold be the werſe for to hele. And right ſo fareth ſinne, that longe time is in a man unſhewed. Certes a man ought haſtily to ſhewe his ſinnes for many cauſes; as for drede of deth, that cometh oft ſodenly, and is in no certain what time it ſhal be, ne in what place; and eke the drenching of o ſinne draweth in another: and alſo the lenger that he tarieth, the ferther is he fro Criſt. And if he abide to his laſt day, ſcarce-

ly

ly may he ſhrive him or remembre him of his ſinnes, or repent him for the grevous maladie of his deth. And for as moche as he ne hath in his lif herkened Jeſu Criſt, whan he hath ſpoken unto him, he ſhal crie unto our Lord at his laſt day, and ſcarcely wol he herken him. And underſtonde that this condition muſte have foure thinges. Firſt that the ſhrift be purveyed afore, and aviſed, for wicked haſt doth not profite; and that a man con ſhrive him of his ſinnes, be it of pride, or envie, and ſo forth, with the ſpices and circumſtances; and that he have comprehended in his minde the nombre and the gretneſſe of his ſinnes, and how longe he hath lien in ſinne; and eke that he be contrite for his ſinnes, and be in ſtedfaſt purpoſe (by the grace of God) never efte to fall into ſinne; and alſo that he drede and countrewaite himſelf, that he flee the occaſions of ſinne, to whiche he is inclined. Alſo thou ſhalt ſhrive thee of all thy ſinnes to o man, and not parcelmele to o man, and parcelmele to another; that is to underſtonde, in entent to depart thy confeſſion for ſhame or drede, for it is but ſtrangling of thy ſoule. For certes, Jeſu Criſt is entierly all good, in him is non imperfection, and therfore either he foryeveth all parfitly,

fitly, or elles never a dele. I ſay not that if thou be aſſigned to thy penitencer for certain ſinne, that thou art bounde to ſhewe him all the remenant of thy ſinnes, of whiche thou haſt ben ſhriven of thy curat, but if it like thee of thyn humilitee; this is no departing of ſhrift. Ne I ſay not, ther as I ſpeke of diviſion of confeſſion, that if thou have licence to ſhrive thee to a diſcrete and an honeſt preeſt, and wher thee liketh, and by the licence of thy curat, that thou ne mayeſt wel ſhrive thee to him of all thy ſinnes; but lete no blot be behind: lete no ſinne be untolde as fer as thou haſt remembrance. And whan thou ſhalt be ſhriven of thy curat, tell him eke all the ſinnes that thou haſt don ſith thou were laſte ſhriven. This is no wicked entente of diviſion of ſhrift.

Alſo the veray ſhrift axeth certain conditions. Firſt that thou ſhrive thee by thy free will, not conſtreined, ne for ſhame of folk, ne for maladie, or ſwiche other thinges: for it is reſon, that he that treſpaſſeth by his free will, that by his free will he confeſſe his treſpas; and that non other man telle his ſinne but himſelf: ne he ſhal not nay, ne deny his ſinne, ne wrath him ayenſt the preeſt for amoneſting him to lete his ſinne. The

ſecond

ſecond condition is, that thy ſhrift be lawful, that is to ſay, that thou that ſhriveſt thee, and eke the preeſt that hereth thy confeſſion, be verily in the feith of holy chirche, and that a man ne be not diſpeired of the mercie of Jeſu Criſt, as Cain and Judas were. And eke a man muſte accuſe himſelf of his owen treſpas and not another: but he ſhal blame and wite himſelfe of his owen malice and of his ſinne, and non other: but natheles, if that another man be encheſon or enticer of his ſinne, or the eſtate of the perſon be ſwiche by which his ſinne is agregged, or elles that he may not plainly ſhrive him but he tell the perſon with whiche he hath ſinned, than may he tell, ſo that his entent ne be not to backbite the perſon, but only to declare his confeſſion.

Thou ne ſhalt not alſo make no leſinges in thy confeſſion for humilitee, peraventure, to ſay that thou haſt committed and don ſwiche ſinnes, of which that thou ne were never gilty. For Seint Auguſtine ſayth; if that thou, becauſe of thin humilitee, makeſt a leſing on thyſelf, though thou were not in ſinne before, yet arte thou than in ſinne thurgh thy leſing. Thou muſt alſo ſhew thy ſinne by thy propre mouth, but thou be dombe, and not by no letter: for thou that haſt

haſt don the ſinne, thou ſhalt have the ſhame of the confeſſion. Thou ſhalt not eke peint thy confeſſion, with faire and ſubtil wordes, to cover the more thy ſinne: for than begileſt thou thyſelf, and not the preeſt: thou muſt tell it plainly, be it never ſo foule ne ſo horrible. Thou ſhalt eke ſhrive thee to a preeſt that is diſcrete to conſeille thee: and eke thou ſhalt not ſhrive thee for vaine glorie, ne for ypocriſie, ne for no cauſe, but only for the doute of Jeſu Criſt, aud the hele of thy ſoule. Thou ſhalt not eke renne to the preeſt al ſodenly, to tell him lightly thy ſinne, as who telleth a jape or a tale, but aviſedly and with good devotion; and generally ſhrive thee ofte: if thou ofte fall, ofte ariſe by confeſſion. And though thou ſhrive thee ofter than ones of ſinne which thou haſt be ſhriven of, it is more merite: and, as ſayth Seint Auguſtine, thou ſhalt have the more lightly releſe and grace of God, both of ſinne and of peine. And certes ones a yere at the leſt way it is lawful to be houſeled, for ſothely ones a yere all thinges in the erthe renovelen.

Explicit ſecunda pars Penitentiæ: et ſequitur tertia pars.

Now

Now have I told you of veray confeſſion, that is the ſeconde part of penitence: The thridde part is ſatisfaction, and that ſtont moſt generally in almeſſe dede and in bodily peine. Now ben ther three maner of almeſſe: contrition of herte, wher a man offreth himſelf to God: another is, to have pitee of the defaute of his neighbour: and the thridde is, in yeving of good conſeil, goſtly and bodily, wher as men have nede, and namely in ſuſtenance of mannes food. And take kepe that a man hath nede of thiſe thinges generally, he hath nede of food, of clothing, and of herberow, he hath nede of charitable conſeilling and viſiting in priſon and in maladie, and ſepulture of his ded body. And if thou maieſt not viſite the nedeful in priſon in thy perſon, viſite hem with thy meſſage and thy yeftes. Thiſe ben generally the almeſſes and werkes of charitee, of hem that have temporel richeſſes, or diſcretion in conſeilling. Of thiſe werkes ſhalt thou heren at the day of dome.

This almeſſe ſhuldeſt thou do of thy propre thinges, and haſtily, and prively if thou mayeſt: but natheles, if thou mayeſt not do it prively, thou ſhalt not forbere to do almeſſe, though men ſee it, ſo that it be not don for thanke of the world,

world, but only to have thanke of Jeſu Criſt. For, as witneſſeth Seint Mathewe, *Cap.* v. a citee may not be hid that is ſette on a mountaine, ne men light not a lanterne, to put it under a buſhell, but ſetten it upon a candleſticke, to lighten the men in the hous: right ſo ſhal your light lighten before men, that they mowe ſee your good werkes, and glorifie your Fader that is in heven.

Now as for to ſpeke of bodily peine, it ſtont in praiers, in waking, in faſting, and in vertuous teching. Of oriſons ye ſhul underſtond, that oriſons or prayers, is to ſay, a pitous will of herte, that ſetteth it in God, and expreſſeth it by word outward, to remeve harmes, and to have thinges ſpirituel and perdurable, and ſomtime temporel thinges. Of which oriſons, certes in the oriſon of the *Paternoſter* hath Jeſu Criſt encloſed moſt thinges. Certes it is privileged of three thinges in his dignitee, for whiche it is more digne than any other prayer: for that Jeſu Criſt himſelf made it: and it is ſhort, for it ſhuld be coude the more lightly, and to hold it the more eſie in herte, and helpe himſelf the ofter with this oriſon, and for a man ſhuld be the leſſe wery to ſay it, and for a man may not excuſe

cuſe him to lerne it, it is ſo ſhorte and ſo eſie: and for it comprehendeth in himſelf all good prayers. The expoſition of this holy prayer, that is ſo excellent and ſo digne, I betake to the maiſters of theologie, ſave thus moche wol I ſay, that whan thou prayeſt, that God ſhuld forgeve thee thy giltes as thou forgeveſt hem that have agilted thee, be wel ware that thou be not out of charitee. This holy oriſon amenuſeth eke venial ſinne, and therfore it apperteineth ſpecially to penitence.

This prayer muſt be trewely ſayd, and in perfect feith, and that men prayen to God ordinately, diſcretely, and devoutly: and alway a man ſhal put his will to be ſubgette to the will of God. This oriſon muſt eke be ſayd with gret humbleſſe and ful pure, and honeſtly, and not to the annoyance of any man or woman. It muſt eke be continued with werkes of charitee. It availeth eke ayenſt the vices of the ſoule: for, as ſayth Seint Jerome, by faſting ben ſaved the vices of the fleſh, and by prayer the vices of the ſoule.

After this thou ſhalt underſtonde, that bodily peine ſtont in waking. For Jeſu Criſt ſayth: wake ye and pray ye, that ye ne enter into wicked temptation.

temptation. Ye ſhul underſtond alſo, that faſting ſtont in three thinges: in forbering of bodily mete and drinke, in forbering of worldly jolitee, and in forbering of dedly ſinne: this is to ſay, that a man ſhall kepe him fro dedly ſinne with all his might.

And thou ſhalt underſtonde alſo, that God ordeined faſting, and to faſting apperteineth foure thinges. Largeneſſe to poure folk: gladneſſe of herte ſpirituel: not to be angry ne annoied, ne grutch for he faſteth: and alſo reſonable houre for to ete by meſure, that is to ſay, a man ſhal not ete in untime, ne ſit the longer at the table, for he faſteth.

Than ſhalt thou underſtonde, that bodily peine ſtont in diſcipline, or teching, by word, or by writing, or by enſample. Alſo in wering of here or of ſtamin, or of habergeons on hir naked fleſh for Criſtes ſake; but ware thee wel that ſwiche maner penances ne make not thin herte bitter or angry, ne annoied of thyſelf; for better is to caſt away thin here than to caſt away the ſweteneſſe of our Lord Jeſu Criſt. And therfore ſayth Seint Poule: clothe you, as they that ben choſen of God in herte, of miſericorde, debonairtee, ſuffrance, and ſwiche maner of clothing,

clothing, of whiche Jeſu Criſt is more pleſed than with the heres or habergeons.

Than is diſcipline eke, in knocking of thy breſt, in ſcourging with yerdes, in kneling, in tribulation, in ſuffring patiently wronges that ben don to thee, and eke in patient ſuffring of maladies, or leſing of worldly catel, or wif, or child, or other frendes.

Than ſhalt thou underſtond, which thinges diſtourben penance, and this is in foure maners; that is drede, ſhame, hope, and wanhope, that is, deſperation. And for to ſpeke firſt of drede, for which he weneth that he may ſuffre no penance, ther ayenſt is remedie for to thinke, that bodily penance is but ſhort and litel at regard of the peine of helle, that is ſo cruel and ſo longe, that it laſteth withouten ende.

Now ayenſt the ſhame that a man hath to ſhrive him, and namely thiſe Ipocrites, that wold be holden ſo parfit, that they have no nede to ſhrive hem, ayenſt that ſhame ſhuld a man thinke, that by way of reſon, he that hath not ben aſhamed to do foule thinges, certes him ought not be aſhamed to do faire thinges, and that is confeſſions. A man ſhuld alſo thinke, that God ſeeth and knoweth al his

thoughtes, and al his werkes, and to him may nothing be hid ne covered. Men ſhuld eke remembre hem of the ſhame that is to come at the day of dome, to hem that ben not penitent in this preſent lif: for all the creatures in heven, and in erthe, and in helle, ſhul ſee apertly all that they hiden in this world.

Now for to ſpeke of the hope of hem, that ben ſo negligent and ſlowe to ſhrive hem: that ſtondeth in two maners. That on is, that he hopeth for to live long, and for to purchaſe moche richeſſe for his delit, and than he wol ſhrive him: and, as he ſayeth, he may, as him ſemeth, than timely ynough come to ſhrift: another is, the ſurquedrie that he hath in Criſtes mercie. Ayenſt the firſt vice, he ſhal thinke that our lif is in no ſikerneſſe, and eke that all the richeſſe in this world ben in aventure, and paſſen as a ſhadowe on a wall; and, as ſayth Seint Gregorie, that it apperteineth to the gret rightwiſneſſe of God, that never ſhal the peine ſtinte of hem, that never wold withdrawe hem from ſinne, hir thankes, but ever continue in ſinne: for thilke perpetuel will to don ſinne ſhall they have perpetuel peine.

Wanhope,

Wanhope is in two maners. The firſt wanhope is, in the mercie of God: that other is, that they think that they ne might not long perſever in goodneſſe. The firſt wanhope cometh of that, he demeth that he hath ſinned ſo gretly and ſo oft, and ſo long lyen in ſinne, that he ſhal not be ſaved. Certes ayenſt that curſed wanhope ſhulde he thinke, that the paſſion of Jeſu Criſt is more ſtronge for to unbinde, than ſinne is ſtrong for to binde. Ayenſt the ſecond wanhope he ſhal thinke, that as often as he falleth, he may ariſen again by penitence: and though he never ſo longe hath lyen in ſinne, the mercie of Criſt is alway redy to receive him to mercie. Ayenſt that wanhope that he demeth he ſhuld not longe perſever in goodneſſe, he ſhal think, that the febleneſſe of the devil may nothing do, but if men wol ſuffre him: and eke he ſhal have ſtrength of the helpe of Jeſu Criſt, and of all his chirche, and of the protection of angels, if him liſt.

Than ſhul men underſtonde, what is the fruit of penance; and after the wordes of Jeſu Criſt, it is an endeles bliſſe of heven, ther joye hath no contrarioſitee of wo ne grevance; ther all harmes ben paſſed of this preſent lif; ther as

is ſikerneſſe from the peines of helle; ther as is the blisful compagnie, that rejoycen hem ever mo everich of others joye; ther as the body of man, that whilom was foule and derke, is more clere than the ſonne; ther as the body that whilom was ſike and freele, feble and mortal, is immortal, and ſo ſtrong and ſo hole, that ther ne may nothing appeire it; ther as is neither hunger, ne thurſte, ne colde, but every ſoule repleniſhed with the ſight of the parfit knowing of God. This blisful regne mowe men purchaſe by poverte ſpirituel, and the glorie by lowlineſſe, the plentee of joye by hunger and thurſt, and the reſte by travaile, and the lif by deth and mortification of ſinne: to which life he us bring, that bought us with his precious blood. Amen.

Now preye I to hem alle that herken this litel tretiſe or reden it, that if ther be any thing in it that liketh hem, that therof they thanken our Lord Jeſu Criſt, of whom procedeth all witte and all godeneſſe; and if ther be any thing that diſpleſeth hem, I preye hem alſo that they arrette it to the defaute of myn unkonning, and not to my wille, that wold fayn have

ſeyde

ſeyde better if I hadde had konning; for oure boke ſeyth, all that is writen is writen for oure doctrine, and that is myn entente. Wherfore I beſeke you mekely for the mercie of God that ye preye for me, that Criſt have mercie of me and foryeve me my giltes, [and namely of myn tranſlations and enditinges of worldly vanitees, the which I revoke in my Retractions, as the boke of Troilus, the boke alſo of Fame, the boke of the five and twenty Ladies, the boke of the Ducheſſe, the boke of Seint Valentines day of the Parlement of briddes, the tales of Canterbury, thilke that ſounen unto ſinne, the boke of the Leon, and many an other boke, if they were in my remembraunce, and many a ſong and many a lecherous lay, Criſt of his grete mercie foryeve me the ſinne. But of the tranſlation of Boes of conſolation, and other bokes of legendes of Seints, and of Omelies, and moralite, and devotion, that thanke I oure Lord Jeſu Criſt, and his blisful mother, and alle the Seintes in heven, beſeking hem that they fro hensforth unto my lyves ende ſende me grace to bewaile my giltes, and to ſtodien to the ſavation of my ſoule,] and graunte me grace of verray penance, confeſſion

and ſatisfaction to don in this preſent lif, thorgh the benigne grace of him, that is king of kinges and preſte of alle preſtes, that bought us with the precious blode of his herte, ſo that I mote ben on of hem atte the laſte day of dome that ſhullen be ſaved; *qui cum Deo patre et Spiritu ſancto vivis et regnas Deus per omnia ſecula. Amen.*

THE END OF THE CANTERBURY TALES.

NOTES

NOTES

ON THE

THIRD VOLUME.

NOTES ON THE THIRD VOLUME.

VERSE 13898, corpus Madrian] The relicks of St. *Maternus*. Gloſſ. Urr. But I can find no ſuch ſaint in the common Legendaries.

Ver. 13948. A right wel faring] I have no better authority for the inſertion of *right* than Ed. Urr.

Ver. 13968. luſſheburghes] Baſe coins, probably, firſt imported, as Skinner thinks, from *Luxembourg*. They are mentioned in the Stat. 25 E. III. c. 2. *la monoie appelle* Lucynbourg, and in P. P. fol. 82. b.

As in *luſshburgh* is a luther alay, yet loketh like ſterling.

Ver. 14013. in the feld of Damaſcene] So Lydgate, from Boccace, ſpeaks of Adam and Eve. *Trag.* B. i. c. 1.

Of ſlime of the erth in *Damaſcene the felde*
God made them above ech creature.

Boccace is much longer in relating their ſtory, which is the firſt of his Tragedies.

Ver. 14021. Sampſon] His tragedy is alſo in Boccace. B. i. c. 19. but our author ſeems rather to have followed the original, Judges xiv, xv, xvi.

Ver. 14080. the querne] *The mill.* Kuerna, *mola.* Iſland.

Ver. 14101. Hercules] In this account of the labours of Hercules Chaucer has evidently copied Boethius, L. iv. Met. 7. Many of the expreſſions he had uſed before in his proſe tranſlation of that author.

Ver. 14116. the hevene on his nekke longe] This is the reading of the beſt Mſſ. and is agreable to Boethius,

Boethius, *loc. cit.* thus tranſlated by Chaucer. "And the laſt of his labors was, that *he ſuſteined the heven upon his necke* unbowed." The margin of Mſ. C. 1. explains *longe* to mean *diu.*

The Editt. read,

And bare *his hed* upon his *ſpere* long.

Ver. 14123. ſaith Trophee] As all the beſt Mſſ. agree in this reading, I have retained it, though I cannot tell what author is alluded to. The margin of C. 1. has this note. *Ille vates Chaldæorum Tropheus.*

The Editt. read—*for trophee.*—

Ver. 14149. Nabuchodonoſor] For this hiſtory, and the following of Balthaſar, ſee Daniel, i—v. The latter only is related by Boccace, B. ii. c. xxiii.

Ver. 14253. Zenobia] Her ſtory is told by Boccace, *De caſ. Vir.* L. viii. c. 7. but more at large in his book *De claris mulieribus*; from which our author has plainly taken almoſt every circumſtance of his narration; though in ver. 14331. he ſeems to refer to Petrarch as his original. Perhaps, Boccace's book had fallen into Chaucer's hands under the name of Petrarch.

Ver. 14295. Till fully fourty dayes] There is a confuſion in this paſſage, which might have been avoided, if our author had recurred to Trebellius Pollio, Trig. Tyrann. c. xxix. de Zenobia. "Quum ſemel concubuiſſet, expectatis menſtruis, continebat ſe ſi prægnans eſſet; ſin minus, iterum poteſtatem quærendis liberis dabat."

Ver. 14378. a vitremite] This word is differently written in the Mſſ. *vitrymite*; *witermite*; *wintermite*; *vitryte.*

vitryte. The Editt. read, *autremite*; which is equally unintelligible.

Ver. 14385. *ſouth* and ſeptentrioun] The Mſſ. read *north*; but there can be no doubt of the propriety of the correction, which was firſt made, I believe, in Ed. Urr. In the *Rom de la R.* from whence great part of this tragedy of Nero is tranſlated, the paſſage ſtands thus, ver. 6501.

Ce deſloyal, que je te dy,
Et d'Orient et de *Midy*,
D'Occident, de Septentrion,
Tint-il la juriſdicion,

Ver. 14408. domeſman] *Judge*. The word in Boethius, who has alſo related this ſtory, is *Cenſor*. L. ii. Met. vi.

Ora non tinxit lacrymis, ſed eſſe
Cenſor extincti potuit decoris —

which our author has thus rendered in his proſe verſion. "Ne no tere wette his face, but he was ſo harde herted, that he might be *domeſman*, or *judge*, of her dedde beautee."

Ver. 14484. Wher Eliachim] I cannot find any prieſt of this name in the book of Judith. The High prieſt of Jeruſalem is called Joacim in c. iv. which name would ſuit the verſe better than Eliachim.

Ver. 14493. Antiochus] This Tragedy is a poetical paraphraſe of II Maccabees, c. ix.

Ver. 14638. word and ende] Dr. Hickes in his Gr. A. S. p. 70. has propoſed to read "*ord* and end," both here and in Tro. B. v. ver. 1668. He has ſhewn very clearly that *ord and end* was a common Saxon expreſſion

expreſſion for *the whole* of a thing; the *beginning and end* of it. But all the Mſſ. that I have examined read *word*, and therefore I have left it in the text, as poſſibly the old Saxon phraſe, in Chaucer's time, might have been corrupted.

Ver. 14645. Creſus] In the opening of this ſtory, our author has plainly copied the following paſſage of his own verſion of Boethius, B. ii. Pro. 2. "Wiſte thou not how Creſus, king of Lydiens, *of whiche king Cyrus was ful ſore agaſte* a litel before, &c." But the greateſt part is taken from the *Rom. de la R.* ver. 6847—6912.

Ver. 14679. Tragedie is] This reflection ſeems to have been ſuggeſted by one which follows ſoon after the mention of Crœſus in the paſſage juſt cited from Boethius. "What other thing bewaylen the cryinges of tragedyes but onely the dedes of fortune, that with an aukewarde ſtroke overtourneth the realmes of grete nobleye?"

Ver. 14685. Peter of Spaine] This tragedie and the three following, in ſeveral Mſſ. are inſerted before, after ver. 14380. So that the Monkes Tale ends with ver. 14684.

And cover hire bright face with a cloude.

In favour of this arrangement, it may be obſerved, that, when the Monk is interrupted, the Hoſte alludes to this line as freſh in his memory, ver. 14788.

He ſpake how *fortune covered with a cloude*
I wote not what, and als of a *tragedie*
Right now ye herd.—

Where

Where *tragedie* may be ſuppoſed to allude to ver. 14679.

On the other hand, though the Monk profeſſedly diſregards chronological order, theſe very modern ſtories in the midſt of the ancient make an aukward appearance; and as the Hoſte declares himſelf to have been half aſleep, he may very well be ſuppoſed to ſpeak from a confuſed recollection of what had been ſaid 88 verſes before. And what he ſays of *tragedie* may be referred to ver. 14768.

I have followed the order obſerved in the beſt Mſſ. C. i. Aſk. 1. 2. HA.

Ver. 14697. Not Charles Oliver] Not the Oliver of Charles [Charlemagne], but an Oliver of Armorica, a ſecond Genelon, or Ganelon. See ver. 13124. 15233. So this paſſage is to be underſtood, which in Ed. Urr. has been changed to—Not Charles, *ne* Oliver.—But who this *Oliver of Bretagne* was, whom our author charges as *werker* of the death of King Petro, is not ſo clear. According to Mariana, L. xvii. c. 13. ſuch a charge might moſt properly be brought againſt *Bertrand* du Gueſclin, a Breton, afterwards Conſtable of France; as it was in conſequence of a private treaty with him, that Petro came to his tent, where he was killed by his brother Henry, and partly (as ſome ſaid) *con ayuda de Beltran*. But how he ſhould come to be called *Oliver* I cannot gueſs; unleſs, perhaps, Chaucer confounded him with *Olivier de Cliſſon*, another famous Breton of thoſe times, who was alſo Conſtable of France after Bertrand. [Froiſſart mentions an *Olivier de Manny*, nephew to Bertrand du

du Gueſclin, as receiving large rewards from King Henry; vol. i. ch. 245. but he does not repreſent him as particularly concerned in the death of Petro.]

The perſon meant, whoever he was, muſt have been ſufficiently pointed out at the time by his coat of arms, which is deſcribed in ver. 14693,4. The "egle of blak" in "a feld of ſnow" is plain enough, but the reſt of the blazonry I cannot pretend to decypher.

Ver. 14701. Petro King of Cypre] Concerning the taking of Alexandria by this prince, and his other exploits, ſee the note on ver. 51. and the authors there cited. He was aſſaſſinated in 1369. Acad. des Inſ. T. xx. p. 439.

Ver. 14709. Barnabo Viſcount] Bernabo Viſconti Duke of Milan, was depoſed by his nephew and thrown into priſon, where he died in 1385.

I did not attend to this circumſtance, when I ſtated the inſurrection of Strawe in 1381, as the lateſt hiſtorical fact mentioned in theſe tales. Diſcourſe &c. n. 6. The death of Bernabo was certainly later. Fortunately however this difference of four years has no other conſequence, than that it makes the ſuppoſed date of the Pilgrimage in 1383, which was before very doubtful, ſtill more improbable. The Knight might as probably be upon a Pilgrimage in 1387 as in 1383, according to the precedent of Sir Mathew de Gourney. See note on ver. 43.

Ver. 14716. Hugelin of Piſe] Chaucer himſelf has referred us to Dante for the original of this tragedy. See *Inferno*. c. xxxiii.

Ver.

Ver. 14765,6. Theſe two verſes in the Editt. have been tranſpoſed, to the confuſion of the ſenſe as well as of the metre.

Ver. 14811. ſay ſomwhat of hunting] For the propriety of this requeſt, ſee the note on ver. 166 of the Monkes Character.

Ver. 14816. thou Sire John] I know not how it has happened, that, in the principal modern languages, John (or its equivalent) is a name of contempt, or at leaſt of ſlight. So the Italians uſe *Gianni*, from whence *Zani*; the Spaniards *Juan*, as *Bobo Juan*, a fooliſh John; the French *Jean*, with various additions; and in Engliſh, when we call a man *a John*, we do not mean it as a title of honour. Chaucer in ver. 3708. uſes *Jacke fool*, as the Spaniards do *Bobo Juan*; and I ſuppoſe *Jack aſs* has the ſame etymology.

The title of *Sire* was uſually given, by courteſy, to Prieſts, both ſecular and regular.

Ver. 14851. a maner dey] *A kind of dey*; but what *a dey* was it is not eaſy to determine preciſely. It is mentioned, as the laſt ſpecies of labourers in huſbandry, in the Stat. 25 Edw. III. St. i. c. 1. Qe cheſcun charetter, caruer, chaceour des carues, bercher, porcher, *deye*, & tous autres ſervantz.—And again in the Stat. 37 Edw. III. c. 14. Item qe charetters, charuers, chaceours des carues, bovers, vachers, berchers, porchers, *deyes*, & tous autres gardeins des beſtes, bateurs des bleez, & toutes maneres des genz *d'eſtate de garſon* entendantz a huſbandrie.—It probably meant originally *a day-labourer* in general, though it may ſince have been uſed to denote particularly

ticularly the ſuperintendant of a *Dayerie*. See Du Cange, in v. DAERIA. DAYERIA. DAGASCALCI.

Ver. 14857. the mery orgon] This is put licentiouſly for *orgons*, or *organs*. It is plain from *gon* in the next line that Chaucer meant to uſe this word as a Plural, from the LAT. GR. *Organa*. He uſes it ſo in ver. 15602.

And while that the organs maden melodie.

Ver. 14876. Was cleped faire damoſelle Pertelote] I ſuſpect that *faire* has been added by ſome one who was unneceſſarily alarmed for the metre.

After this verſe the Editt. (except Ca. 1.) have the two following.

He fethered her a hundred times a day,
And ſhe him pleaſeth all that ever ſhe may.

But as I found them in only two Mſſ. HA. and D. I was glad to leave them out as an injudicious interpolation. See below, ver. 15183.

Whoever wiſhes to ſee a great deal of uncertain etymology concerning the name *Pertelote*, may conſult Gl. V. in v. PARTELOT.

Ver. 14881. loken in every lith] *Locked* in every *limb*. The Editt. read *loking*.

Ver. 14885. My leſe is fare in lond] *Fare*, or *faren*; gone. So the beſt Mſſ. Ed. Ca. 2. reads—*fer*. It is not eaſy to determine which of theſe is the true reading, unleſs we ſhould recover the old ſong, from which this paſſage ſeems to be quoted.

Ver. 14914. Away, quod ſhe] I have here inadvertently followed the printed copies. But inſtead of

of *Away* the beſt Mſſ. read *Avoy*, which is more likely to have been uſed by Chaucer. The word occurs frequently in the French Fabliaux &c. See T. ii. p. 243,5. The Vocabulary, at the end of that volume, renders *Avoi*, *Helas*; but it ſeems to ſignify no more than our *Away!* The Italians uſe *Via!* in the ſame manner. *Roman de Troye.* Mſ.

Lors dit Thoas, *Avoi*, *avoi*,
Sire Achilles, vous dites mal.

Ver. 14946. Lo Caton] L. ii. Diſt. 32. Somnia ne cures. I obſerve, by the way, that this diſtich is quoted by John of Saliſbury, Polycrat. L. ii, c. 16. as a precept *viri ſapientis*. In another place, L. vii. c. 9. he introduces his quotation of the firſt verſe of Diſt. 20. L. iii. in this manner. Ait *vel Cato*, *vel alius*, nam autor incertus eſt—.

Ver. 14971. Catapuce] *Catapuzza*, Ital. *Catapuce*, Fr. A kind of Spurge.

Ver. 14990. On of the greteſt authors] Cicero [*de Divin.* L. i. c. 27.] relates this and the following ſtory; but in a contrary order; and with ſo many other differences, that one might be led to ſuſpect that he was here quoted at ſecond hand, if it were not uſual with Chaucer, in theſe ſtories of familiar life, to throw in a number of natural circumſtances, not to be found in his original authors.

Ver. 15116. Seint Kenelme] See his life in all the Editt. of the Engliſh *Golden Legende*.

Ver. 15147. Lo hire Andromacha] We muſt not look for this dream of Andromache in Homer. The firſt author who relates it is the fictitious Dares, c.

xxiv. and Chaucer very probably took it from him, or from Guido de Columnis; or perhaps from Benoit de Sainte More, whoſe *Roman de Troye* I believe to have been that Hiſtory of Dares, which Guido profeſſes to follow, and has indeed almoſt entirely tranſlated. A full diſcuſſion of this point, by a compariſon of Guido's work with the *Roman de Troye*, would require more time and pains than I am inclined to beſtow upon it. I will juſt mention a circumſtance, which, if it can be verified, will bring the queſtion to a much ſhorter deciſion. The *Verſio Daretis Phrygii Gallico metro*, in the Ambroſian Library, of which Montfaucon ſpeaks, *Diar. Ital.* p. 19. is undoubtedly the *Roman de Troye* by Benoit de Sainte More. The verſes, which are there quoted, differ no otherwiſe from the beginning of Benoit's Poem in Mſ. *Harl.* 4482. than as an old copy uſually does from a more modern one. If therefore we can depend upon Montfaucon's judgement, that the Mſ. which he ſaw was written in the xiith Century, it will follow, that Benoit wrote near a hundred years before Guido, whoſe work, in all the Mſſ. that I have ſeen or heard of, is uniformly ſaid to have been finiſhed in the year 1287. There can be no doubt that the later of theſe two writers copied from the former.

Ver. 15169. ſo ſiker as *In principio*] See the note on ver. 256.

The next line is taken from the fabulous conference between the Emperour Adrian and Secundus the Philoſopher, of which ſome account has been given in

in n. on ver. 6777. *Quid eſt mulier?* Hominis confuſio, inſaturabilis beſtia &c.

Ver. 15196. Sithen March ended] I have ventured to depart from the Mſſ. and Editt. in this paſſage. They all read *began* inſtead of *ended*. At the ſame time Mſ. C. 1. has this note in the margin, "i. 2° die Maii." which plainly ſuppoſes that the 32 days are to be reckoned from the end of March. As the Vernal Equinox (according to our author's hypotheſis, Diſcourſe &c. p. 122) happened on the 12th of March, the place of the ſun (as deſcribed in ver. 15200,1) in 22° of Taurus agrees very nearly with his true place on the 2d of May, the 53d day incl. from the Equinox. Mſ. C. reads thus,

Syn March began tway monthes and dayes two;

which brings us to the ſame day, but, I think, by a leſs probable correction of the faulty copies.

Ver. 15205. Twenty degrees] The reading of the greateſt part of the Mſſ. is *Fourty degrees*. But that is evidently wrong; for Chaucer is ſpeaking of the altitude of the Sun at, or about, Prime, i. e. ſix o'clock A. M. See ver. 15203. When the Sun is in 22° of Taurus, he is 21° high about $\frac{3}{4}$ after 6 A. M.

Ver. 15215. At the ſide of this verſe is written in the margin of Mſ. C. *Petrus Comeſtor*, to intimate, I ſuppoſe, that this maxim is to be found in the *Hiſtoria Scholaſtica* of that author, who was a celebrated commentator on the Bible in the xiith Century. See Fabricius, Bib. Med. Ætat. in v.

Ver. 15221. A col fox] Skinner interprets this *a blackiſh fox*, as if it were *a cole fox*. Gl. Urr. It is

much eaſier to refute this interpretation than to aſſign the true one. *Coll* appears from ver. 15389 to have been a common name for a dog. In compoſition, it is to be taken *in malam partem*, but in what preciſe ſenſe I cannot ſay. See Chaucer's H. of F. B. iii. 187. *Coll-tragetour*—and in the Mirr. for Mag. Leg. of Glendour, fol. 127. b. *Colprophet* is plainly put for a *falſe*, *lying* prophet. Heywood has an Epigram *Of coleprophet*. Cent. vi. Ep. 89.

> Thy propheſy poyſonly to the pricke goth:
> *Coleprophet* and *colepoyſon* thou art both.

And in his Proverbial Dialogues P. i. ch. x. he has the following lines.

> *Coll* under canſtyk ſhe can plaie on both hands:
> Diſſimulation well ſhe underſtands.

I will add an alluſion of our author, in the Teſt. of Love, B. ii. fol. cccxxxiii. b. to a ſtory of one *Collo*, which I cannot explain. "Buſiris ſlewe his geſtes, and he was ſlain of Hercules his geſte. Hugeſt betrayſhed many men, and of *Collo* was he betrayed."

Ver. 15240. But what that God] This paſſage has been tranſlated into (rather elegant) Latin Iambics by Sir H. Savil, in his preface to Bradwardin, *de cauſâ Dei*, Lond. 1618. See the Teſtimonies &c. prefixed to Ed. Urr. Our author has diſcuſſed this queſtion of the divine preſcience &c. more at large in his Troilus, B. 4. from ver. 957 to ver. 1078. It is an addition of his own, of which there is no trace in the Philoſtrato of Boccace. See Eſſay &c. n. 62.

Ver.

Ver. 15277. Phiſiologus] He alludes, I ſuppoſe, to a book in Latin metre, entitled, *Phyſiologus de naturis* XII *animalium*, by one Theobaldus, whoſe age is not known. Fabr. Bib. Med. Æt. in v. THEOBALDUS. There is a copy of this work in Mſ. *Harl.* 3093. in which the ixth ſection *De Sirenis* begins thus:

Sirenæ ſunt monſtra maris reſonantia magnis
Vocibus et modulis cantus formantia multis,
Ad quas incaute veniunt ſæpiſſime nautæ,
Quæ faciunt ſompnum nimia dulcedine vocum &c.

See alſo R. R. ver. 680.

Ver. 15318. in Dan Burnell the aſſe] The ſtory alluded to is in a poem of Nigel Wireker, entitled, *Burnellus, ſeu Speculum ſtultorum*, written in the time of Richard I. The ſubſtance of the ſtory is in Gl. Urr. v. BURNEL. The Poem itſelf is in moſt collections of Mſſ. The printed copies are more rare, though there have been ſeveral editions of it. See Leyſer, *Hiſt. Po. Med. Ævi*, p. 752,3.

Burnell is uſed as a nickname for the aſs in the Cheſter Whitſun Playes. Mſ. *Harl.* 2013. [See the note on ver. 3539.] In the pageant of Balaam, he ſays—

Go forth, *Burnell*, go forth, go.
What? the devil, my aſſe will not go.

and again, fol. 36. b.

Burnell, why begileſt thou me?

The original word was, probably, *Brunell*, from his brown colour; as the Fox below, ver. 15340. is called *Ruſſell*, from his red colour, I ſuppoſe.

Ver. 15341. by the gargat] The Editt. have changed this into *gorget*; but *gargat* is an old Fr. word. *Rom. de Rou.* Mſ. *Reg.* 4 C. xi.

O grant culteals e od granz cuignees
Lur unt *les gargates* trenchies.

Ver. 15353. O Gaufride] He alludes to a paſſage in the *Nova Poetria* of Geoffrey de Vinſauf, publiſhed not long after the death of Richard I. In this work the author has not only given inſtructions for compoſing in the different ſtyles of Poetry, but alſo examples. His ſpecimen of the plaintive kind of compoſition begins thus:

Neuſtria, ſub clypeo regis defenſa Ricardi,
Indefenſa modo, geſtu teſtare dolorem.
Exundent oculi lacrymas; exterminet ora
Pallor; connodet digitos tortura; cruentet
Interiora dolor, et verberet æthera clamor:
Tota peris ex morte ſuâ. Mors non fuit ejus,
Sed tua; non una, ſed publica mortis origo.
O Veneris lacrymoſa dies! o ſydus amarum!
Illa dies tua nox fuit, et Venus illa venenum.
Illa dedit vulnus, &c.

Theſe lines are ſufficient to ſhew the object, and the propriety, of Chaucer's ridicule. The whole poem is printed in Leyſer's *Hiſt. Po. Med. Ævi*, p. 862—978.

Ver. 15451. As ſayth my Lord] Oppoſite to this verſe, in the Margin of Mſ. C. 1. is written "Kantuar," which means, I ſuppoſe, that ſome Archbiſhop of Canterbury is quoted.

Ver.

Ver. 15468. Sayd to another] I have obſerved, in the Diſcourſe, &c. § xxxvii. that in Mſſ. Aſk. 1. 2. this line is read thus,

Seide unto *the nunne* as ye ſhul heer.

The following are the ſix forged lines, which the ſame Mſſ. exhibite by way of introduction to the Nonnes tale.

Madame, and I dorſte, I wolde you pray
To telle a tale in fortheringe of our way.
Than mighte ye do unto us grete eſe.
Gladly, ſire, quoth ſhe, ſo that I might pleſe
You and this worthy company,
And began hir tale riht thus ful ſobrely.

Ver. 15514. out of relees] All the beſt Mſſ. concur in this reading, and therefore I have followed them, though I confeſs that I do not clearly underſtand the phraſe; unleſs perhaps it mean *without releaſe*; *without being ever releaſed from their duty*. The common reading *withouten lees* is a genuine Saxon phraſe. Butan leas; *abſque falſo:* without a lie.

Ver. 15518. Aſſembled is] This ſtanza is very like one in the Prioreſſes tale. ver. 13403—13410.

Ver. 15530. Sone of Eve] See the Diſcourſe, &c. § xxxvii. n. 30.

Ver. 15536. Be thou min advocat] I have no better authority for the inſertion of *thou* than Ed. Urr. The metre, perhaps, might be ſafe without it (conſidering *highe* as a diſſyllable), but the verſe would be very rough.

Ver. 15553. Firſt wol I] The note upon this in the Margin of Mſ. C. 1. is—" *Interpretatio* &c. *quam*

ponit Frater Jacobus Januenſis in Legendâ aureâ." It has been obſerved in the Diſcourſe, &c. that this whole tale is almoſt literally tranſlated from the *Legenda aurea.*

Ver. 15654. louting] i. *latitantem.* Marg. Mſ. C. 1. from the SAX. *lutan*, or *lutian*; *latere.*

Ver, 15675. On Lord, on faith] I have adopted this reading in preference to that of the beſt Mſſ.—O Lord, o faith, o God &c.—in order to guard againſt the miſtake, which the Editt. have generally fallen into, of conſidering *o*, in this paſſage, as the ſign of the vocative caſe. *On* and *o* are uſed indifferently by Chaucer to ſignify *one.*

Ver. 15738. And of the miracle] I ſhould have been glad to have met with any authority for leaving out this parentheſis of fourteen lines, which interrupts the narration ſo aukwardly, and to ſo little purpoſe. The ſubſtance of it is in the printed Editions of the Latin *Legenda aurea*, but appears evidently to have been at firſt a marginal obſervation, and to have crept into the text by the blunder of ſome copyiſt. Accordingly it is wanting in Caxton's *Golden Legende*, and, I ſuppoſe, in the French *Legende Dorée*, from which he tranſlated. The author of the French verſion had either made uſe of an uncorrupted Mſ. or perhaps had been ſagacious enough to diſcern and reject the interpolation.

Ver. 15783. And we alſo] It ſhould have been *vs.* I take notice of this, becauſe Chaucer is very rarely guilty of ſuch an offence againſt grammar.

Ver. 15855. Your cours is don] So all the Mſſ. In Ed. Urr. *don* is changed to *run*; and I believe no modern

modern poet would have joined any other verb with *cours*, eſpecially after he had uſed *ydon* in the preceding line; but I am not clear that Chaucer attended to ſuch niceties.

In the latter part of this line, the beſt Mſſ. read—your faith *han ye* conſerved.—and I know not by what negligence I omitted to follow them.

Ver. 15966. thin utter eyen] *Exterioribus oculis.* Marg. Mſ. C. 1.

Ver. 16023. five mile] So all the Mſſ. except E. which reads "*half a mile.*" This latter reading muſt certainly be preferred, if we ſuppoſe that Chaucer meant to mark the interval between the concluſion of the Nonnes tale and the arrival of the Chanon. But it would be contrary to the general plan of our author's work, and to his practice upon other occaſions, that the Hoſte ſhould ſuffer the company

"To riden by the way, dombe as the ſton,"

even for half a mile. I am therefore rather inclined to believe that *five mile* is the right reading, and that it was intended to mark the diſtance from *ſome place*, which we are now unable to determine with certainty, for want of the Prologue to the Nonnes tale.

I have ſometimes ſuſpected, that it was the intention of Chaucer to begin the journey *from* Canterbury with the Nonnes tale. In that caſe, *five mile* would mark very truly the diſtance from Canterbury to Boughton under blee. The circumſtances too of the Chanon's overtaking the pilgrims and looking, "as he had priked," or galloped, "miles three," would agree better with this ſuppoſition. It is ſcarce credible

dible that he ſhould have ridden after them from Southwark to Boughton without overtaking them; and if he had, it muſt have been a very inadequate repreſentation of his condition, to ſay that "it ſemed, he had priked *miles three*." Beſides, the words of the Yeman [ver. 16056,7.]

—Now in the morwe tide
Out of your hoſtelrie I ſaw you ride—

ſeem to imply, that they were overtaken in the ſame morning in which they ſet out; but it muſt have been conſiderably after noon before they reached Boughton from Southwark.

There is another way of ſolving theſe difficulties, by ſuppoſing that the Pilgrims lay upon the road, and that the Nonnes tale was the firſt of the ſecond day's journey. It is moſt probable, that a great part of the company (not to mention their horſes) would have had no objection to dividing the journey to Canterbury into two days; but if they lay only five miles on this ſide of Boughton, I do not ſee how they coud ſpend the whole ſecond day till evening [See ver. 17316] in travelling from thence to Canterbury.

I muſt take notice too, in oppoſition to my firſt hypotheſis, that the manner, in which the Yeman expreſſes himſelf in ver. 16091,2. ſeems to ſhew that he was riding *to* Canterbury.

Ver. 16156. For Caton ſayth] This precept of Cato is in L. 1. Diſt. 17.

Ne cures ſi quis tacito ſermone loquatur;
Conſcius ipſe ſibi de ſe putat omnia dici.

Ver.

Ver. 16211. thurgh jupartie] So Mſ. C. 1. I have followed it, as it comes neareſt to the true original of our word *jeopardie*, which our etymologiſts have ſadly miſtaken. They deduce it from *J'ai perdu*, or *Jeu perdu*; but I rather believe it to be a corruption of *Jeu parti*. A *jeu parti* is properly a game, in which the chances are exactly even. [See Froiſſart, v. i. c. 234. Ils n'eſtoient pas à *jeu parti* contre les François, v. ii. c. 9. ſe nous les voyons à *jeu parti*.] From hence it ſignifies any thing uncertain, or hazardous. In the old French Poetry, the diſcuſſion of a Problem, where much might be ſaid on both ſides, was called a *Jeu parti*. See *Poeſies du Roy de Navarre*, Chanſon xlviii. and *Gloſſ.* in v. See alſo Du Cange in v. JOCUS PARTITUS.

Ver. 16288. The foure ſpirites &c.] Compare Gower, *De Conf. Am.* B. iv. fol. 76. b.

Ver. 16306. Aſcaunce] See the note on ver. 7327.

Ver. 16430. But all thing] This is taken from the *Parabolæ* of *Alanus de Inſulis*, who died in 1294. See Leyſer, *Hiſt. Po. Med. Ævi*, p. 1074.

Non teneas aurum totum quod ſplendet ut aurum,
Nec pulchrum pomum quodlibet eſſe bonum.

Ver. 16480. a preeſt an annuellere] They were called *annuelleres*, not from their receiving a yearly ſtipend, as the Gloſſ. explains it, but from their being employed ſolely in ſinging *annuals*, or *anniverſary Maſſes*, for the dead, without any cure of ſoules. See the Stat. 36 Edw. III. c. x. where the *Chapelleins Parochiels* are diſtinguiſhed from others *chantanz anuales*,

les, et a cure des almes nient entendantz. They were both to receive yearly ſtipends, but the former was allowed to take ſix marks, and the latter only five. Compare Stat. 2 H. V. St. 2. c. 2. where the ſtipend of the *Chapellein Parochiel* is raiſed to eight marks, and that of the *Chapellein annueler* (he is ſo named in the ſtatute) to ſeven.

Ver. 16915. the ſecree of ſecrees] He alludes to a treatiſe, entitled, *Secreta Secretorum*, which was ſuppoſed to contain the ſum of Ariſtotles inſtructions to Alexander. See Fabric. Bibl. Gr. v. ii. p. 167. It was very popular in the middle ages. Ægidius de Columnâ, a famous divine and biſhop, about the latter end of the xiiith Century, built upon it his book *De regimine principum*, of which our Occleve made a free tranſlation in Engliſh verſe, and addreſſed it to Henry V, while Prince of Wales. A part of Lydgates tranſlation of the *Secreta Secretorum* is printed in Aſhmole's *Theat. Chem. Brit.* p. 397. He did not tranſlate more than about half of it, being prevented by death. See Mſ. *Harl.* 2251. and Tanner, *Bib. Brit.* in v. LYDGATE. The greateſt part of the viith Book of Gower's *Conf. Amant.* is taken from this ſuppoſed work of Ariſtotle.

Ver. 16918. As his book Senior] Ed. Urr. reads—As *in* his book—which I ſhould have preferred to the common reading, if I had found it in any copy of better authority.

The book alluded to is printed in the *Theatrum Chemicum*, vol. v. p. 219. under this title. "Senioris Zadith ſil. Hamuelis tabula Chymica." The ſtory which

which follows of Plato and his diſciple is there told, [p. 249.] with ſome variations, of Salomon. "Dixit *Salomon* rex, Recipe lapidem qui dicitur *Thitarios*—Dixit ſapiens, Aſſigna mihi illum. Dixit, eſt corpus *magneſiæ*—Dixit, quid eſt *magneſia?* Reſpondit, *magneſia* eſt *aqua*, compoſita &c."

Ver. 16961. Do him come forth] So Mſſ. Aſk. 1. 2. and ſome others. The common reading is—Do him *comfort*. The alteration is material, not only as it gives a clearer ſenſe, but as it intimates to us, that the narrator of a tale was made to come out of the crowd, and to take his place within hearing of the Hoſt, during his narration. Agreably to this notion when the Hoſt calls upon Chaucer, [ver. 13628] he ſays,

Approche nere, and loke up merily.
Now ware you, Sires, and let this man have place.

It was neceſſary that the Hoſte, who was to be "juge and reportour" of the tales [ver. 816], ſhould hear them all diſtinctly. The others might hear as much as they coud, or as they choſe, of them. It would have required the lungs of a Stentor, to ſpeak audibly to a company of thirty people, trotting on together in a road of the fourteenth Century.

Ver. 16965. to ſlepen by *the morwe*] This muſt be underſtood generally for *the day-time*; as it was then after-noon. It has been obſerved in the Diſcourſe &c. § xiii. that, in this epiſode of the Coke, no notice is taken of his having told a tale before.

Ver. 16991. wol ye juſt at the fan?] Some Mſſ. read—*van*. The ſenſe of both words is the ſame.

The

The thing meant is the *Quintaine*, which is called a *fan*, or *van*, from its turning round like a weather-cock. See Du Cange in v. VANA; Meneſtrier *ſur les tournois*, as quoted by Menage, *Dict. Etymol.* in v. QUINTAINE; and Kennet's *Paroch. Antiq.*

Ver. 16993. win of ape] This is the reading of Mſſ. HA. D. E. and Ed. Ca. 1. and I believe the true one. The explanation in the Gloſſ. of this and the preceding paſſage, from Mr. Speght, is too ridiculous to be repeated. *Wine of ape* I underſtand to mean the ſame as *vin de ſinge* in the old *Calendrier des Bergiers*. Sign. l. ii. b. The author is treating of Phyſiognomy, and in his deſcription of the four temperaments he mentions, among other circumſtances, the different effects of wine upon them. The Cholerick, he ſays, *a vin de Lyon; ceſt a dire, quant a bien beu veult tanſer noyſer et battre*—The Sanguine, *a vin de Singe; quant a plus beu tant eſt plus joyeux*—In the ſame manner the Phlegmatick is ſaid to have *vin de mouton*, and the Melancholick *vin de porceau*.

I find the ſame four animals applied to illuſtrate the effects of wine in a little Rabbinical tradition, which I ſhall tranſcribe here from Fabric. Cod. Pſeudepig. V. T. vol. i. p. 275. *Vineas plantanti Noacho Satanam ſe junxiſſe memorant, qui, dum Noa vites plantaret, mactaverit apud illas* ovem, leonem, ſimiam *et* ſuem: *Quod principio potûs vini homo ſit inſtar* ovis, *vinum ſumptum efficiat ex homine* leonem, *largius hauſtum mutet eum in ſaltantem* ſimiam, *ad ebrietatem infuſum tranſformet illum in pollutam et proſtratam* ſuem. See alſo *Geſta Romanorum*, c. 159. where a ſtory of the ſame purport

purport is quoted from Joſephus, *in libro de caſu rerum naturalium.*

Ver. 16999. a faire chivachee] A fair *expedition.* See the note on ver. 85. The common Editt. read—*chevisance.*

Ver. 17112. Take any brid] This paſſage is too like one which has occurred before in the Squieres tale, ver. 10925. The thought is plainly taken from Boethius, L. iii. Met. 2. See alſo *Rom. de la R.* ver. 14717—34.

Ver. 17124. Let take a cat] This is imitated from *Rom. de la R.* ver. 14825.

Ver. 17130. Lo, here hath kind] So Mſſ. Aſk. 1. 2. The common Editt. read, *luſt. Kind* is *nature.* See the next line but one, and ver. 10922,4.

Ver. 17132. A ſhe-wolf] This is alſo from the *Rom. de la R.* ver. 8142.

Tout ainſi comme fait la louve,
Que ſa folie tant empire,
Qu'elle prent de tous loups le pire.

Ver. 17173. or any theſe] *Any* is from conjecture only, inſtead of *a*, the reading of all the Mſſ. that I have conſulted. The reading of Ed. Urr. is—or *elles* a theſe—whether from authority or conjecture I cannot tell; but even as a conjecture I ſhould have adopted it in preference to my own, if I had taken notice of it in time.

Ver. 17278. My ſone, thy tonge] In the *Rom. de la R.* ver. 7399. this precept is quoted from *Ptolomée,*

Au commencer *de l'Almageſte.*

See the note on ver. 5764.

Ver.

Ver. 17281. The firſte vertue] This precept is alſo quoted in the *Rom. de la R.* ver. 7415. from Cato. It is extant L. i. Diſt. 3.

Virtutem primam eſſe puta compeſcere linguam.

Ver. 17308. be non auctour newe] This ſeems to be from Cato. L. i. Diſt. 12.

Rumores fuge, ne incipias *novus auctor* haberi,

It looks as if Chaucer read,

Rumoris fuge ne incipias novus auctor haberi.

Ver. 17315. Foure of the clock] See the Diſcourſe &c. § xli.

Ver. 17321. Therwith the mones exaltation In mene Libra alway gan aſcend] This is a very obſcure paſſage. Some of the Mſſ. read—I mene Libra. According to the reading which I have followed, *exaltation* is not to be conſidered as a technical term, but as ſignifying ſimply *riſing*; and the ſenſe will be, *that the moon's riſing, in the middle of Libra, was continually aſcending* &c.

If *exaltation* be taken in its technical meaning, as explained in the note on ver. 6284, it will be impoſſible to make any ſenſe of either of the readings: for the *exaltation of the moon* was not in *Libra*, but in *Taurus*. *Kalendrier des Bergiers*. Sign. i. ult. Mr. Speght, I ſuppoſe, being aware of this, altered *Libra* into *Taurus*; but he did not conſider, that the Sun, which has juſt been ſaid to be *deſcending*, was at that time in *Taurus*, and that conſequently *Taurus* muſt alſo have been *deſcending*.

Libra therefore ſhould by no means be parted with. Being in that part of the Zodiac which is nearly oppoſite

poſite to *Taurus* (the place of the ſun), it is very properly repreſented as *aſcending* above the horizon toward the time of the Sun's ſetting. If any alteration were to be admitted, I ſhould be for reading—

Therwith *Saturnes* exaltation,
I mene Libra, alway gan aſcende—

The exaltation of *Saturn* was in *Libra*. *Kalendrier des Bergers*. Sign. K. i.

Ver. 17354. I cannot geſte, rom, ram, raf] This is plainly a contemptuous manner of deſcribing *alliterative poetry*; and the Perſon's prefatory declaration that "he is a Southern man," would lead one to imagine, that compoſitions in that ſtyle were, at this time, chiefly confined to the Northern provinces. It was obſerved long ago by William of Malmeſbury, l. iii. *Pontif. Angl.* that the language of the North of England was ſo harſh and unpoliſhed, as to be ſcarce intelligible to a Southern man. *Quod propter viciniam barbararum gentium, et propter remotionem regum quondam Anglorum modo Normannorum contigit, qui magis ad Auſtrum quam ad Aquilonem diverſati noſcuntur.* From the ſame cauſes we may preſume, that it was often long before the improvements in the poetical art, which from time to time were made in the South, coud find their way into the North; ſo that there the hobbling alliterative verſe might ſtill be in the higheſt requeſt, even after Chaucer had eſtabliſhed the uſe of the Heroic metre in this part of the iſland. Dr. Percy has quoted an alliterative poem by a Cheſhire man on the battle of Flodden in 1513, and he has remarked "that all ſuch poets as uſed this kind of metre, retained along with it many peculiar Saxon

idioms." Eſſay on Metre of P. P. This may perhaps have been owing to their being generally inhabitants of the Northern counties, where the old Saxon idiom underwent much fewer and ſlower alterations, than it did in the neighbourhood of the capital.

To geſte here is *to relate geſtes*. In ver. 13861. he has called it *to telle in geſte*. Both paſſages ſeem to imply that *Geſtes* were chiefly written in alliterative verſe, but the latter paſſage more ſtrongly than this. After the Hoſt has told Chaucer, that he "ſhall no longer *rime*," he goes on —

"Let ſee wher thou canſt tellen ought *in geſte*,
Or tellen *in proſe* ſomwhat at the leſte—"

Geſte there ſeems to be put for a ſpecies of compoſition, which was neither *Rime* nor *Proſe*; and what that coud be, except *alliterative metre*, I cannot gueſs. At the ſame time I muſt own, that I know no other paſſage which authorizes the interpretation of *Geſte* in this confined ſenſe. In the H. of F. ii. 114. Chaucer ſpeaks of himſelf as making—

"bokes, ſonges, ditees
In *rime*, or elles in *cadence*."

where *cadence*, I think, muſt mean a ſpecies of poetical compoſition diſtinct from riming verſes. The name might be properly enough applied to the metre uſed in the *Ormulum* [See the Eſſay, &c. n. 52.], but no work of Chaucer in any ſuch metre, without rime, has come within my obſervation.

Ver. 17378. had the wordes] This is a French phraſe. It is applied to the Speaker of the Commons in *Rot. Parl.* 51 E. III. n. 87. Monſ. Thomas de

de Hungerford, Chivaler, qi *avoit les paroles* pur les Communes d'Angleterre en ceſt Parlement, &c.

P. 143. l. 2. forlete ſinne or that ſinne forlete hem] The ſame thought occurs, by way of precept, at the end of the Doctour's tale, ver. 12220.

Forſaketh ſinne or ſinne you *forſake*.

P. 175. l. 1. ſayth Moyſes] I cannot tell where. Perhaps there may be ſome ſuch paſſage in the Rabbinical hiſtories of Moſes, which the learned Gaulmin publiſhed in the laſt century [Paris, 1629, 8°.], and which, among other traditions, contain that alluded to by S. Jude, Ep. ver. 9.

P. 176. l. 12. in the *thurrok*] The Editt. have changed this word, in this place, into *timber*, though, in another place, p. 223. l. *penult*. they have left it, and Mr. Speght explains it to mean *an heap*. It is a Saxon word, which the Gloſſaries render *cymba*, *caupolus*, (originally perhaps *campulus*, as it was ſometimes written. Du Cange, in v. CAUPULUS). It ſeems to have ſignified any ſort of *keeled* veſſel, and from thence, what we call, *the hold* of a ſhip. The following explanation of it from an old book, entitled, "*Oure Ladyes mirroure*" [Lond. 1530. fol. 57. b.], will fully juſtify Chaucer's uſe of it in both places, in the firſt literally, and in the ſecond metaphorically. "Ye ſhall underſtande that there ys a place in the bottome of a ſhyppe, wherin ys gathered all the fylthe that cometh into the ſhyppe—and it is called in ſome contre of thys londe a *thorrocke*. Other calle yt an *hamron*, and ſome calle yt the *bulcke* of the ſhyppe." I know not what to make of *hamron*.

P. 183. l. 4. outragious array of clothing] What follows ſhould be read carefully by any Antiquary, who may mean to write *de Re Veſtiariâ* of the Engliſh nation in the xivth Century.

P. 258. l. *penult.* ſo high doctrine I lete to divines] See before, ver. 17366—71. and below, p. 271. l. 7. "The expoſition of this—I betake to the maiſters of Theologie." The ſecular clergy, in the time of Chaucer, being generally very ignorant, it would not have been in character, I ſuppoſe, to repreſent the Perſone as a deep divine, though a very pious, worthy Prieſt. The Frere (whoſe brethren had the largeſt ſhare of the learning which was then in faſhion) is made to ſpeak with great contempt of the Parochial Paſtors, ver. 7590.

"This every *lewed* Vicar and Perſon
Can ſay &c."

And yet in the Perſon's Character, ver. 402. we are told, that —

"He was alſo a *lerned* man, a *clerk*."

It may be doubted therefore, whether in theſe paſſages Chaucer may not ſpeak for himſelf, forgetting or neglecting the character of the real ſpeaker.

P. 276. l. 18. Now preye I to hem alle &c.] What follows being found, with ſome ſmall variations, in all complete Mſſ. (I believe) of the Canterbury tales, and in both Caxton's Editions, which were undoubtedly printed from Mſſ. there was no pretence to leave it out in this Edition, however difficult it may be to give any ſatisfactory account of it.

I muſt firſt take notice, that this paſſage in Mſ. Aſk. 1. is introduced by theſe words—

Here

Here taketh the maker his leve.

and is concluded by theſe—

Here endeth the Perſonnys Tale.

In Mſ. Aſk. 2. there is a ſimilar introduction and concluſion in Latin; at the beginning,—*Hic capit auctor licentiam*—and at the end,—*Explicit narratio Rectoris, et ultima inter narrationes hujus libri de quibus compoſuit Chaucer, cujus anime propicietur Deus. Amen.*

Theſe two Mſſ. therefore may be conſidered as agreeing in ſubſtance with thoſe Mſſ. mentioned in the Diſcourſe, &c. § xlii. in which this paſſage makes part of the Perſones Tale. One of them is deſcribed by Hearne, in his letter to Bagford, App. to R. G. p. 661, 2.

In Edit. Ca. 2. as quoted by Ames, p. 56. it is clearly ſeparated from the Perſones Tale, and entitled,

The Prayer.

In the Mſſ. in which it is alſo ſeparated from the Perſones tale, I do not remember to have ſeen it diſtinguiſhed by any title, either of *Prayer*, or *Revocation*; or *Retractation*, as it is called in the Preface to Ed. Urry. If we believe what is ſaid in p. 277. l. 7. Chaucer had written a diſtinct piece entitled, *his Retractions*, in which he had revoked his blameable compoſitions.

The juſt inference from theſe variations in the Mſſ. is perhaps, that none of them are to be at all relied on; that different Copyiſts have given this paſſage the title that pleaſed them beſt, and have attributed it to the Perſone or to Chaucer, as the matter ſeemed to them to be moſt ſuitable to the one or the other.

Mr. Hearne, whoſe greateſt weakneſs was not his incredulity, has declared his ſuſpicion, "that the Revocation (meaning this whole paſſage) is not genuine, but that it was made by the Monks." [App. to R. G. p. 603.]. I cannot go quite ſo far. I think, if the Monks had ſet about making a Revocation for Chaucer to be annexed to the Canterbury Tales, they would have made one more in form. The ſame objection lies to the ſuppoſal, that it was made by himſelf.

The moſt probable hypotheſis, which has occurred to me, for the ſolution of theſe difficulties, is to ſuppoſe, that the beginning of this paſſage (except the words *or reden it* in l. 19.) and the end make together the genuine concluſion of the Perſones Tale, and that the middle part, which I have incloſed between hooks, is an interpolation.

It muſt be allowed, I think (as I have obſerved before in the Diſcourſe, &c. § xlii.), that the appellation of "litel tretiſe" ſuits better with the Perſones tale taken ſingly, than with the whole work. The doubt expreſſed in l. 22. "if there be any thing that diſpleſeth &c." is very agreeable to the manner in which the Perſone ſpeaks in his Prologue, ver. 17366. [See the note on p. 258. l. *penult.*] The mention of "verray penance confeſſion and ſatisfaction" in p. 277. l. *penult.* ſeems to refer pointedly to the ſubject of the ſpeaker's preceding diſcourſe; and the title given to Chriſt in p. 270. l. 2. "Preeſt of all Preeſtes" ſeems peculiarly proper in the mouth of a Preeſt.

So much for thoſe parts which may be ſuppoſed to have originally belonged to the Perſone. With reſpect to the middle part, I think it not improbable, that Chaucer

Chaucer might be perſuaded, by the Religious who attended him in his laſt illneſs, to revoke, or retract, certain of his works; or at leaſt that they might give out, that he had made ſuch Retractions as they thought proper. In either caſe, it is poſſible that the ſame zeal might think it expedient to join the ſubſtance of theſe Retractions to the Canterbury Tales, the antidote to the poiſon; and might accordingly procure the preſent interpolation to be made in the Epilogue to the Perſones Tale, taking care at the ſame time, by the inſertion of the words "*or reden it*" in l. 19. to convert that epilogue from an addreſs of the Perſone to his *hearers* into an addreſs of Chaucer to his *readers*.

But, leaving theſe very uncertain ſpeculations, I will ſay a few words upon thoſe *enditinges of worldly vanitees*, which are here ſuppoſed to have ſitten heavy on our author's conſcience.

P. 277. l. 9. the boke of Troilus] It has been ſaid in the Eſſay, &c. n. 62. that the Troilus is borrowed from the Filoſtrato of Boccace. This is evident not only from the Fable and Characters, which are the ſame in both poems, but alſo from a number of paſſages in the Engliſh which are literally tranſlated from the Italian. At the ſame time there are ſeveral long paſſages, and even epiſodes, in the Troilus, of which there are no traces in the Filoſtrato. Of theſe therefore it may be doubted, whether Chaucer has added them out of his own invention, or taken them either from ſome completer copy of Boccace's poem than what we have in print, or from ſome copy interpolated by another hand. He ſpeaks of himſelf as a tranſlator *out of Latin*, B. ii. 14. and in two paſſages he quotes

his author by the name of *Lollius*, B. i. 394—421, and B. v. 1652. The latter paſſage is in the Filoſtrato, but the former (in which the 102d Sonnet of Petrarch is introduced) is not. What he ſays of having tranſlated *out of Latin* need not make any difficulty, as the *Italian* language was commonly called *Latino volgare* [See the quotation from the Theſeida, Diſcourſe, &c. n. 9.]; and Lydgate [Prol. to Boccace] expreſsly tells us, that Chaucer tranſlated—"a boke, which called is *Trophe*,

In *Lombard tonge*, as men may rede and ſee."

How *Boccace* ſhould have acquired the name of *Lollius*, and the *Filoſtrato* the title of *Trophe*, are points which I confeſs myſelf unable to explain.

Ibid. the boke of Fame] Chaucer mentions this among his works in the Leg. of G. W. ver. 417. He wrote it while he was Comptroller of the Cuſtom of wools, &c. [See B. ii. ver. 144—8.] and conſequently after the year 1374. See App. to Pref. C.

Ibid. l. 10. the boke of five and twenty Ladies] This is the reading of all the Mſſ. If it be genuine, it affords a ſtrong proof that this enumeration of Chaucer's works was not drawn up by himſelf; as there is no ground for believing that *the Legende of Good women* ever contained, or was intended to contain, the hiſtories of *five and twenty* Ladies. See the note on ver. 4481. It is poſſible however that xxv may have been put by miſtake for xix.

Ibid. the boke of the Ducheſſe] See the note on ver. 4467. One might have imagined that this poem, written upon a particular occaſion, was in all probability an original compoſition; but upon comparing the

the portrait of a beautiful woman, which M. de la Ravaliere [Poeſ. du R. de N. Gloſſ. v. Belee.] has cited from Mſ. *du Roi*, N° 7612. with Chaucer's deſcription of his heroine [ver. 817, *et ſeq.*], I find that ſeveral lines in the latter are literally tranſlated from the former. I ſhould not therefore be ſurprized, if, upon a further examination of that Mſ. it ſhould appear, that our author, according to his uſual practice, had borrowed a conſiderable part of his work from ſome French poet.

Ibid. l. 11. the boke of Seint Valentines day &c.] In the Editt. *the Aſſemblee of Foules*. Chaucer himſelf in the Leg. of G. W. ver. 419. calls it *the Parlement of Foules*. See the note on ver. 1920. and App. to Pref. C. note (*e*).

Ibid. l. 12. the tales of Canterbury &c.] If we ſuppoſe, that this paſſage was written by Chaucer himſelf, to make part of the concluſion of his Canterbury Tales, it muſt appear rather extraordinary, that he ſhould mention thoſe tales in this general manner, and in the midſt of his other works. It would have been more natural to have placed them either at the beginning or at the end of his catalogue.

Ibid. l. 14. the boke of the Leon] This book is alſo aſcribed to Chaucer by Lydgate [Prol. to Boccace], but no Mſ. of it has hitherto been diſcovered. It may poſſibly have been a tranſlation of *Le dit du Lion*, a poem of Guillaume de Machaut, compoſed in the year 1342. Acad. des Inſc. t. xx. p. 379. 408. Some lines from this poem, as I apprehend, are quoted in the Gloſſary to *Poeſ. du Roi de N.* v. Arrousers. Bacheler.

Whether

Whether we ſuppoſe this liſt of Chaucer's exceptionable works to have been drawn up by himſelf, or by any other perſon, it is unaccountable that his tranſlation of the *Roman de la Roſe* ſhould be omitted. If he tranſlated the whole of that very extraordinary compoſition, (as is moſt probable,) he coud ſcarce avoid being guilty of a much greater licentiouſneſs, in ſentiment as well as diction, than we find in any of his other writings. His tranſlation, as we have it, breaks off at ver. 5370. of the original [ver. 5810. Ed. Urr.], and beginning again at ver. 11253. ends imperfect at ver. 13105. In the latter part we have a ſtrong proof of the negligence of the firſt editor, who did not perceive that two leaves in his Mſ. were miſplaced. The paſſage from ver. 7013 to ver. 7062 incl. and the paſſage from ver. 7257 to ver. 7304 incl. ſhould be inſerted after ver. 7160. The later Editors have all copied this, as well as many other blunders of leſs conſequence, which they muſt have diſcovered, if they had conſulted the French original.

A Bacheler, who dances with Franchiſe, is ſaid to reſemble

"The Lordes ſonne of Wyndeſore."

[R. R. ver. 1250.]

This ſeems to be a compliment to the young Princes in general, rather than to any particular ſon of Edward III, who is certainly meant by *the Lord of Windſor*. In the French it is ſimply—Il ſembloit eſtre *filz de Roy*.

Additional Notes.

Ver. 104. peacok arwes] *Arrows with peacock feathers.* See Mr. Warton's illuſtration of this paſſage. Hiſt. of Eng. Po. p. 450.

There is a Patent in Rymer, 15 R. II. *de arte ſagittandi per Valettos Regis exercendâ.* The *Yeomen*, and all other Servants of the Royal houſehold, of whatever ſtate or office, *under the degree of Yeomen*, are ordered to carry Bows and arrows with them, whenever they ride, &c. in the King's train.

Ver. 169. his bridel—Gingeling] See this faſhion of hanging bells on bridles, &c. illuſtrated by Mr. Warton, Hiſt. of Eng. Po. p. 164. See alſo below, ver. 14800,1.

Ver. 307. in forme and reverence] *with propriety and modeſty.* In the next line "*ful of high ſentence*" means only, I apprehend, "*full of high*, or *excellent*, *ſenſe.*"—Mr. Warton will excuſe me for ſuggeſting theſe explanations of this paſſage in lieu of thoſe which he has given in his *Hiſt. of Eng. Po.* p. 451. The credit of good letters is concerned, that Chaucer ſhould not be ſuppoſed to have made "a pedantic formality," and "a preciſe ſententious ſtyle on all ſubjects," the characteriſtics of a ſcholar.

Ver. 331. a ſeint of ſilk with barres ſmale] It appears from our author's tranſlation of R. R. ver. 1103. that *barres* were called *cloux* in French, and were an uſual ornament of a girdle. See Mr. Warton's Hiſt. p. 377. 426. *Clavus* in Latin, from whence the Fr. *Cloux* is derived, ſeems to have ſignified not only an outward

outward *border*, but alſo what we call a *ſtripe*. Montfaucon, t. iii. part i. ch. vi. A *Bar* in Heraldry is a narrow *ſtripe*, or *Faſcia*. Du Cange, in v. CLAVATUS, quotes the *Statut. Andegav.* an. 1423. in which the Clergy, and eſpecially the Regulars, are forbid to wear *zonas auro clavatas*.

Ver. 388. a mormal] A *cancer*, or *gangrene*. So the Gloſſ. and I believe Chaucer meant no more, by his confining the diſeaſe to *the ſhin*. The original word, *Malum mortuum*, LAT. *Mauxmorz*, FR. ſeems to have ſignified a kind of dead palſy, which took away entirely the uſe of the legs and feet. Du Cange, in v. MALUM MORTUUM. Jonſon, in imitation of this paſſage, has deſcribed a cook with an—" old mortmal on his ſhin." *Sad Shepherd.* A. ii. S. vi.

Ver. 627. *Note.* Add—The Original of the word ſeems to be pointed out in the following paſſage. Vit. R. ii. a Mon. Eveſh. p. 169. " facies alba — interdum *ſanguinis fleumate* viciata."

Ver. 2154. *Torettes*] Rather, *toretes*, with the Mſſ. from the FR. *Touret*, which is explained by Cotgrave to ſignify, among other things, " *the little ring*, by which a Hawkes *Lune* [or, *Leaſh*] is faſtened unto the Jeſſes." Mr. Warton has ſhewn, by ſeveral quotations, that *toretes* were affixed to the collars of dogs, for a ſimilar purpoſe. Hiſt. of Eng. Po. p. 364. Our author ſays, that " the Ringe [of the Aſtrolabe] renneth in a manner of a *turet*." Tr. of Aſt. fol. 291. b.

Ver. 2608. the herte ſpone] This part of the human body is not mentioned in any Dictionary, that I have ſeen. The following paſſage of Jonſon [*Sad Shepherd.*

Shepherd. A. i. S. vi.] would incline one to ſuſpect, that it means the concave part of the breaſt, where the lower ribs unite with the *cartilago enſiformis*.

— He that undoes *him*, [the deer,]
Doth cleave the *briſket bone*, upon the *ſpoon*
Of which a little griſtle grows—

The Gloſſ. ſuppoſes *ſpone* to be a Participle, ſignifying *Thruſt*, *driven*, *puſht*; from the It. *Spingere*.

Ver. 3247. blisful for to ſee] The better Mſſ. read—*on* to ſee,—which I believe is right. See Lydg. Troy, B. iii. ch. xxii,

His brother *Troylus*, ſo goodly *on* to ſee.—

and Gower, *Conf. Am.* fol. 17. b.

Tho was ſhe fouler *unto* [r. *on to*] *ſe*.

Ver. 3251. perled with latoun] That is, I believe, *ornamented with latoun in the ſhape of pearls*. It is probable that ſome very elegant purſes were embroidered with real pearls.

Ver. 3853. Whan folk han laughed] The better Mſſ. read—*laughen*, which therefore is probably right. Chaucer ſometimes forms the Participle of the paſt time in *en*, even in thoſe verbs, of which he alſo uſes the Participle in *ed*. See ver. 3311. *waſhen*; 7354. *faren*; for *waſhed*, and *fared*.

Ver. 3902. of a ſouter a ſhipman or a leche.] The Proverbial expreſſion, *Ex ſutore medicus*, was perhaps derived from the fable of Phædrus with that title. L. i. Fab. 14. The other, *Ex ſutore nauclerus*, is alluded to by Pynſon the printer, at the end of his Edit. of Littelton's Tenures, 1525. [*Ames*, p. 488.] Speaking of one Redman, another printer, he ſays,—"Miror profecto

profecto unde nunc tandem ſe fateatur typographum, niſi forte quum Diabolus *ſutorem nauclerum*, et illum calcographum fecit."

Ver. 3990. *Note.* Add—Mr. Warton ſtrongly confirms this reading. Hiſt. of Eng. Po. p. 432. note n.

Ver. 4059. *Note.* Add—See the *Town and Country Magazine*, for May, 1769, p. 273.—When this note was written, I was in hopes of being able to refer the reader to ſome more creditable edition of this poem. But the influence of thoſe malignant ſtars, which ſo long confined poor Rowley in his iron cheſt, ſeems ſtill to predominate. Seriouſly it were much to be wiſhed, that the gentleman, who is poſſeſſed of the ſtill remaining fragments of this unfortunate author, would print them as ſoon as poſſible. If he ſhould not have leiſure or inclination to be the Editor himſelf, he might eaſily find a proper perſon to take that trouble for him, as nothing more would be requiſite, than to print the ſeveral pieces faithfully from their reſpective Mſſ. diſtinguiſhing which of thoſe Mſſ. are originals and which tranſcripts, and alſo by whom, and when, the tranſcripts were made, as far as that can be aſcertained.

Ver. 4094. make a clerkes berde] i. e. *cheat* him. *Faire la barbe*, Fr. is to *ſhave*, or *trim* the beard; but Chaucer tranſlates the phraſe literally, at leaſt when he uſes it in its metaphorical ſenſe. See ver. 5943. and H. of F. ii. 181. Boccace has the ſame metaphor. *Decam.* viii. 10. Speaking of ſome exorbitant cheats, he ſays, that they applied themſelves—"*non a* radere *ma a ſcorticare huomini:*" and a little lower—"*ſi a ſoavemente* la barbiera *ſaputo menare il raſoio.*"

Ver.

Ver. 4348. *Note.* Add—I have lately met with another (I ſuppoſe, the true) receipt for ſtuffing a Gooſe in Mſ. *Harl.* 279. It begins—" Take *percely* and ſwynis grece or ſewet of a ſhepe and parboyle hem, &c."

Ver. 5002. The following plot of the Knight againſt Conſtance [from this ver. to ver. 5030.], and alſo her adventure with the Steward [from ver. 5330 to ver. 5344.], are both to be found (with ſome ſmall variations) in a Story in the *Geſta Romanorum*, ch. 101. Mſ. *Harl.* 2270. Occleve has verſified the whole ſtory; as he has another from the ſame collection, *De Johnatha et muliere malâ*, ch. 54. *Ibid.* (cxx. *Edit.*) See an excellent Mſ. of Occleve's works, *Bib. Reg.* 17 D. vi. The firſt poem begins,—" In the Romain jeſtes writen is thus:" the ſecond,—" Some time an Emperour prudent and wiſe."

Ver. 5799. The bacon—at Donmow] See Blount's Ant. Tenures, p. 162. This whimſical inſtitution was not peculiar to Dunmow. There was the ſame in Bretagne. " A l'Abbaie Sainct Melaine, près Rennes, y a, plus de ſix cens ans ſont, un coſté de lard encore tout frais et non corrompu; et neantmoins voué et ordonné aux premiers, qui par an et jour enſemble mariez ont veſcu ſans debat, grondement, et ſans s'en repentir." *Contes d'Eutrap*, t. ii. p. 161.

Ver. 6457. undermeles] The undermele, i. e. *undern-mele*, was the dinner of our anceſtors. See the note on ver. 8136.

Ver. 7488. mendiants] In Mſ. A. it is *mendinants*, both here and below, ver. 7494. which reading, though

though not agreeable to analogy, is perhaps the true one, as I find the word conſtantly ſo ſpelled in the Stat. 12 R. II. c. 7, 8, 9, 10.

Ver. 10261. Ye maſe, ye maſen] The final *n* has been added without authority, and unneceſſarily. This line is very oddly written in Mſſ. Aſk. 1. 2.

Ya may ya may ya quod ſhe.

Ver. 10921, thilke text] Boethius, l. iii. met. 2.

Repetunt proprios quæque recurſus,
Redituque ſuo ſingula gaudent.—

which our author has thus tranſlated. "All thynges ſeken ayen to hir propre courſe, and all thynges rejoyſen on hir retourninge agayne to hir nature." The compariſon of the Bird is taken from the ſame place.

Ver. 12914. I ſmell a loller] This is in character, as appears from a treatiſe of the time. *Harl. Catal.* n. 1666. "Now in Engelond it is a comun protectioun ayens perſecutioun—if a man is cuſtomable to ſwere nedeles and fals and unaviſed, by the bones, nailes, and ſides and other membres of Criſt.—And to abſteyne fro othes nedeles and unleful,—and repreve ſinne by way of charite, is mater and cauſe now, why Prelates and ſum Lordes ſclaundren men, and clepen hem *Lollardes*, Eretikes, &c."

Ver. 14881. *Note.* Add—*Loken* is uſed by Occleve, in the firſt of his poems mentioned above in n. on ver. 5002.

Leſte was the Erles chamber dore unſtoken,
To which he came, and fonde it was not *loken.*

Diſcourſe, &c. n. 32. Add—See App. to Pref. A. n. (*e*) p. xiv.

THE END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

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